THE
General Delusion
OF
CHRISTIANS,

Touching the Ways of

GOD's revealing Himself,

To, and By the

PROPHETS,

Evinc'd from

Scripture and *Primitive Antiquity.*

And many Principles of **Scoffers, Atheists, Sadducees,** and **Wild Enthusiasts,** refuted.

The Whole adapted, as much as possible, to the meanest Capacity.

In Four PARTS.

Prophecy came not [ἐ οἰνέχθη, was not, or is brought] *at any Time, by the Will of Man; but Holy Men of God spake,* [φερόμενοι,] *being violently moved by* [ὑπὸ *under*] *the Holy Spirit.*

LONDON:

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PART I. Is a minute Enquiry into the Scripture, touching the ſeveral Ways uſed of God in revealing Himſelf, *viz. The Apparition of Angels, Divine Dreams, Prophetick Viſions, Voices heard*, and *Inſpiration*. Wherein, the Original Text is carefully heeded, and illuſtrated from the moſt antient and univerſally eſteem'd Verſions of it, and explained alſo from the moſt learned Annotators thereon.

PART II. Is an Extract from moſt of the Writers (now extant) unto the Time of *Conſtantine*; ſhewing from them, that the *Spirit of Prophecy* continued to be publickly acknowledg'd exiſting, for Three Hundred Years at leaſt.

PART III. Imports, that the Spirit which was condemn'd by ſome Churches, during the ſaid Ages, under the Name of *Montaniſm*, for Diabolical, was probably, by all that appears of it, upon any good Authority, the true *Spirit of Prophecy*.

PART IV. Gives an Account of many now-a-days prevailing Principles, touching the *Spirit of Prophecy*, which are prov'd to be Antiſcriptural, and which nevertheleſs are taken to be deciſive, in the Trial of Spirits.

THE

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THE SPIRIT of PROPHECY DEFENDED,

FROM

Scripture and Primitive Antiquity,

Againſt all its

OPPOSERS, ANCIENT and MODERN.

PART I.

The INTRODUCTION.

§. THE whole Subject of this Treatiſe, being upon One Point of Reveal'd Religion; We in Charity, make no doubt, but thoſe that are ſincere among Chriſtians, and who however ſtand oppoſed to the Diſcuſſion of it herein, do act, as the *Jews* are ſaid to do in reſpect of our Saviour, from ſome conceiv'd Principle of Zeal for God. But ſince it is requiſite, that our Zeal for God, ſhould be regulated by, and according to *Knowledge*,

A other-

otherwiſe it may be no leſs than a fighting againſt Him, under that Denomination, as theirs alſo was; we are in Conſequence, neceſſarily to enquire into the Quality of that Knowledge, that can give a Diſtinction between Effects of it, ſo very different and oppoſite the one from the other. St. *Paul* tells us, *we know, that we all have Knowledge*; and indeed, there is no Man, but what pretends to the Priviledge, and that doubtleſs without juſt Reproach, unleſs we come to diſtinguiſh, touching the Subject of that Knowledge; now, the ſole Subject of this Treatiſe, being confin'd to that of Reveal'd Religion, it follows in Courſe, that the Knowledge that is to decide in it, muſt be a Knowledge of God, as reveal'd; accordingly, the Apoſtle 1 *Cor.* viii. 1-3. ſubjoins to the Declaration, that *we know, that we all have Knowledge*, that Explanation of it, *if any Man think that he knoweth any thing* (perfectly of God,) *he knoweth nothing YET, as he ought to know*; that is, that whoever indulges a Thought, that he knoweth God perfectly, he ſo far, knoweth nothing at all, as he ought to know.

§ 2. According to this Definition of Chriſtian Knowledge, if the Great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, (whom all Ages have and ſhall juſtify, in the Title aſſumed, of a wiſe Maſter-Builder) does confeſs for himſelf and others, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9--12. that he *propheſied but in part, and he knew but in part*, and ſtill the Things of God appear'd to him, ἐν αἰνίγματι, *thro' a Glaſs darkly*, in a Riddle, that is, veiled with Ænigmatical Shades, as the full Senſe of a Thing is couched under the Obſcurities of a Riddle. We might be apt to think, that there is no Man now, who is Partaker of the Charity (in that Chapter deſcribed) that vaunteth not it ſelf, nor behaves it unſeemly, who would not readily ſit down at the Feet of that bright Apoſtle, and own the ſame Things with him. But alas! there is nothing more common among Chriſtians of this Age, than upon a Diſcourſe touching God incomprehenſible, to find Men laying claim, to know all things perfectly of Him; and if we enquire, how they came by ſuch a Knowledge, tranſcendently ſuperior to one, who was not behind the very chief of our Lord's Apoſtles; they tell us, the ſame Apoſtle ſubjoins to the Words above, *when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away*; that is, (by Dr. *Hick*'s *Enthuſiaſm exorcis'd*) *when the perfect State of the Church is come, then that which is imperfect and obſcure* (*viz.* the Spirit of Prophecy) *ſhall be done away.*

away. Indeed, if this were the true Senſe of the Text juſt cited, we have full Aſſurance, that the Church was never more than in our Days, at the full Stature of Manhood, ſeeing that all Things Prophetical are accounted for meer Childiſhneſs; but ſince the *Wiſdom* of God, was ever Fooliſhneſs with Man, the Purpoſe of this Treatiſe is, to inſiſt upon the Prerogative of the *former*; and to ſhew that the Perfection of Manhood now-a-days claimed, is but a doating upon *Science*, falſly ſo called.

§ 3. The Perſons then with whom we have to do, in this Argument of the Contempt of Prophecy, are not denominated by any particular Church or Communion, but are ſpread thro' the whole Lump, cloathing their Necks with Arrogance, as the Horſe is ſaid to do with Thunder; for upon every Debate, touching the myſterious Things of God, 'tis no unuſual Thing to ſee a Man ruſh into the Battle, with a Gayety unreined and full Career, ſtretching out his Hand againſt the Almighty, and running *upon him, even on his Neck, upon the thick Boſſes of his Bucklers*, Job xv. 26. Againſt all which Preſumption, and Haughtineſs of Pride, we have Recourſe to the aforeſaid Axiom, that, *if any Man think, he knoweth any thing* (perfectly of God) *he knoweth nothing yet, as he ought to know*: For, as we have properly no Knowledge of God revealed, but what is derived to us by the Spirit of Prophecy, we are not only taught by Him in St. *Paul*, that *we know but in part*, but in St. *Peter* alſo, that *the Word of Prophecy is a Light that ſhineth in a dark Place*, 2 Pet. i. 19. Furthermore, we underſtand from thence, *Rom.* xi. 33. that *the Depth of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God, is unſearchable, and his Ways paſt finding out*; but that He *dwelleth in the Light, which no Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath ſeen, nor can ſee*, 1 Tim. vi. 16. The inſpir'd Pſalmiſt concurs, that, *his Judgments are a great Deep, his Way is in the Sea, his Path in the great Waters, and his Footſteps are not known.* And in *Job* we have it, that, *but a little Portion of his Ways can be traced, and upon the utmoſt ſearching, we cannot find out the Almighty unto Perfection.* Pſal. xxxvii. 6. lxxvii. 19. Job xxvi. 14. xxxvii. 23. xi. 7.

§ 4. Let not then the Arrogance of Men, be father'd upon the Scripture, ſeeing it is plain, that whoever ſo behaves it, knoweth nothing thereof yet, as he ought to know; and if any Man does pretend to know God more perfectly,

ſome other Ways, than he may from Scripture; I would deſire him, firſt, before that Claim can be admitted, to unlock and unfold to me, all the Myſteries, occurring in the animal and vegetable Creatures; for it is otherwiſe unfit that he preſume to talk dogmatically of the Creator Himſelf. I am ſure, there are Leſſons in the Aerial and Celeſtial Works of God, as well as the Earthly, enough ſo far to ſtop and ſilence the Whiſpers of Self-conceit, if we would attend to them; that without having paſſed thro' theſe, we ſhould not make ſo bold with Infinity, as todare to go about to circumſcribe Him. But, until we can ſatisfactorily ſolve all theſe, it would become us as Men, better to know our Diſtance, and learn by the Foils our Underſtanding meets with, from the Nature and Motion of the loweſt Reptile, how with Sobriety and Awfulneſs to abſtain, from intruding upon Him, who is far above all Viſibility. For, if we cannot with all our minuteſt Scrutiny, fully comprehend the Frame and Operations of a little Worm, we doubt not to conclude, but that feeble Creature is much more at a Loſs, to inveſtigate the Nobility of our ſuperior Nature. Why then ſhould Man, who in reſpect to the Original of his Body, is a Worm, and who in meaſuring himſelf by the Compariſon, has Reaſon enough (if he will uſe it) to gather, that he muſt needs ſtand, at a wider Remove from the Eternal Father of Spirits, than the moſt contemptible Crawler does from himſelf; and why, I ſay, ſhould he preſume *that* for himſelf, which he will not, upon parallel Ground, allow his Brother Creature?

§ 5. If then it be not for every Man, to ſolve the many Riddles and Difficulties, that are every where legible in the Book of the Creation, we need but have Recourſe to the more intelligent therein, and we ſhall find their Ingenuity, in confeſſing, that they cannot. And if the Philoſopher acknowledge himſelf unable, to give a full and diſtinct Account, of the Earthly Things, which are the proper Subjects of his daily Study and Contemplation; nay, after he has dedicated a long Life, to a Scrutiny after ſome few, and perhaps leſs noble Parts of that Enquiry: If the *Aſtronomer* leave us much more in the dark, touching the Heavenly Orbs and Meteors, the Planets and fixed Stars: If the Ways of Providence occurring among Men, and even thoſe over the four-foot Beaſts and Fowls, the feeding of young Ravens, and the Fall of a little Sparrow

to the Ground (aſcribed to God) are altogether inſcrutable to us: If the *Anotamiſt* and *Phyſician*, cannot fathom the myſterious Depths, in the Texture, Generation, Growth and Operations, of the human Body. And if the manner of an immaterial Soul's Union with it for a Time, affords yet Room, after the utmoſt Exertion of our natural Faculties, for a clearer Solution: We have not yet touched upon the Wonders that are found in the deep and wide Ocean; nor upon thoſe that lie hid in the Nature of all the Four Elements; nor upon thoſe that the Bowels of the Earth have ſometimes diſcloſed: But if in all theſe, we may know (if we will reflect) that we are very much to ſeek, how much more in the Myſteries of his Word, is that Light to be acknowledged impenetrable, that no mortal Eye can approach unto?

§ 6. By the Natural Light of Reaſon indeed, every Man is capable, if diſpoſed, of diſcerning and collecting ſo much of God, from his Works of Creation and Providence, as will leave him without juſt Excuſe for violating the Truth known by it, by Unrighteouſneſs of Life; for *Rom.* i. 19, 20. *The inviſible Things of him, even his eternal Power and Godhead, and that which may be known of him, are manifeſtly ſet forth and ſhew'd to all Men, and if they are minded, they are ſeen* (νοουμενα καθορατα) *being underſtood by the Things that are made*, that they who wilfully neglect theſe Items, may be without Excuſe for their Contempt of Him. So that God never ſince the Creation, *Acts* xiv. 17. *left himſelf without Witneſs of his Being; no, nor of his Bounty, in giving us Rain from Heaven and fruitful Seaſons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladneſs, that we might praiſe him, with that Underſtanding which he hath given us above the Beaſts* (as it's worded in *Job.*) And all Circumſtances conſider'd, there ſeems but little Advantage ariſing to Man's preſent Happineſs from his Underſtanding, above the Beaſts, further than he employ it, *to feel after and ſeek the Lord*; unto which Employment there is great Encouragement, ſeeing he may ſo eaſily be found, being every where viſible in the Lineaments of his Power and Goodneſs, inſtead of far from every one of us. Wherefore a duly attentive Mind, upon the Book of the Creation, inſtead of forgetting the Impreſſions of a Deity, may on the contrary ſay, as *David, whither could I fly from his Preſence?* But all this does not hinder what is ſaid above, that there do remain, even to the moſt intelligent and ob-

ſervant, a great many Objects in the natural World, and in the ſeveral Parts of the viſible Creation, that tranſcend the Reach of Man's weakned Capacity, to penetrate fully into. And thus the Number of Incomprehenſibles and Unaccountables, found interſperſed in the viſible Creation, do altogether loudly call our to Man; that God, in all Things ſupernatural, and in his Direction of the ſpiritual Worlds, is much leſs to be meaſured by that Reaſon, which is too ſcanty, when applied, but to the Objects of Senſe.

§ 7. It is then no Diſgrace upon revealed Religion, if there be therein alſo, Subjects unaccountable for, from the rational Faculties; nor a ſufficient Warrant to neglect the Study of holy Writ, becauſe there are Unintelligibles in it, as well as in the Book of Nature. For why ſhould any be offended with revealed Subjects of Religion, on this Account, ſeeing ſupernatural Things ought to be allowed, exempt from the meaſure of what is natural in Man to trace; and it is a Fault in him, and condemnable by his own Reaſon to expect it ſhould be otherwiſe. In theſe Things, we are to yield up our ſelves to the Father of Spirits, and take them upon his Word; nor can it be an unequitable Thing in Him, from whom we live, and move, and have our Being, to demand and require from us, an Obedience to his abſolute Will, and a Succumbence of our Underſtandings unto his. Our Reaſon ſuffices to convince us, that He may juſtly do thus; and on our Part, to be ſubject to the Father of Spirits, is no degrading of our Nature, but on the contrary, the Capacity we have of receiving his Laws and Will, is our greateſt Ennoblement. An Aſſent to what is demonſtrated to Reaſon, is properly Intelligence, and not Faith; for Faith in its true Definition, is a Homage and bowing down of the Mind, or Acknowledgment of that to be true, which carries but a Moral, and not a Demonſtrative Evidence to us; therefore, in the extraordinary Methods of God revealing his Will, if he diſcover ſuch Characters and Criterions of Himſelf, as are not rationally to be judged compatible with the Enemy of Mankind; upon ſuch Evidence of his Hand in it, the Obedience of Faith becomes our Duty, by the Submiſſion of our Underſtandings; tho' there be ſome Things, in the Way and Manner of his revealing, as well as in the Subjects thereof, which we are unable fully to comprehend, by our natural Powers.

§ 8.

§ 8. The Purport of the enſuing Treatiſe, being a Diſquiſition of the divers Ways and Manners, wherein the Divine Majeſty did condeſcend, to impart unto Man, his Will; it neither ought, nor can be rightly an Objection, to our believing Him therein, that every thing is not demonſtratively obvious in thoſe his Steps; any more than the Unaccountables in Nature, and Subjects of Revelation are a Warrant of our deſpiſing, and rejecting the Knowledge, that may be had of Him, in them. As then, there are many Things in the Book of Nature, and in the written Word, that ſurpaſs the Reach of our Intellect to comprehend, and yet we can read, diſcern and acknowledge God in them; ſo likewiſe we ought to do, with reſpect to the Methods He ſerved himſelf of, in revealing. But that in Fact, there was ſomething uſually, in the Way and Manner of revealing, that gave Offence, becauſe unaccountable for, by Natural Reaſon, I conceive appears ſufficiently clear; not ſo much from the ordinary rejecting of the Word of the Lord, by the People in common, to whom it was ſent, but principally becauſe thoſe Perſons who were moſt diſtinguiſhed for Wiſdom and Literature, are in the ſacred Records moſt ſtigmatized, for their Diſobedience to, and Contempt of it. The Hiſtorical Parts of the Old and New Teſtament, do furniſh abundant Inſtances of this kind, but what at preſent I ſhall prove it by, is the Declaration of the living Oracle it ſelf, that what was commonly eſteem'd among Men, for Wiſdom and Science, was moſt averſe to true WISDOM and Knowledge, and to the Inſpiration of Him, who is the Fountain and Father of Light intellectual.

§ 9. For thus in *Iſaiah* xxix. 9---20. He beſpeaks the Learned, to whom the Unlearned are there repreſented to ſubmit and refer themſelves, in what concerned their Reverence due to God. *Stay your ſelves, and wonder! they are blinded, and blind others,* [Heb.] *they are drunken, but not with Wine, they ſtagger but not with ſtrong Drink; for the Lord hath poured out upon ye, the Spirit of deep Sleep,* [*Chald.* Error.] *and hath cloſed your Eyes, and the Viſion of all* [*A. M.* the Prophets, *Chald.* All Prophecy] *is become unto ye, as the Words of a Letter ſealed; wherefore the Lord ſaid, foraſmuch as this People draw near with their Mouth, and with their Lips do honour me, but have removed their Heart* FAR *from me, and their Fear towards me is taught by the Precepts of Men;* [*Greek,* But in vain do they worſhip me, teaching Mens Precepts

and Doctrines;] *therefore, Behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous Work, and a Wonder among this People, for the Wiſdom of their wiſe Men ſhall periſh*; [*Gr.* I will deſtroy the Wiſdom of the wiſe;] *and the Underſtanding of their prudent Men ſhall be hid. Woe unto them, that ſeek deep* [are profound] *to hide their Council from the Lord, and their Works are* [*Gr.* they conſult] *in the dark, and they ſay, who ſeeth us? and who knoweth us?* [*Gr.* or what we do?] *Surely your turning of Things upſide down, ſhall be eſteem'd as the Potter's Clay*; [alterable at my Pleaſure;] *for ſhall the Work ſay of him that made it, he made me not? or the Thing framed ſay of him that framed it, he had no Underſtanding?* [*Gr.* has not made me wiſely?] *Lebanon* [a Foreſt high Ground] *ſhall be turned into a fruitful Field*; [low Ground;] *and the fruitful Field, be eſteem'd as a Foreſt. In that Day ſhall the deaf hear the Words of the Letter, and the Eyes of the blind ſhall ſee out of Obſcurity*; [or the Fog;] *the meek* [oppreſſed and lowly] *alſo ſhall encreaſe their Joy in the Lord, and the poor among Men* [*Gr.* the hopeleſs, *Chald.* the oppreſſed] *ſhall rejoice in the Holy One of Iſrael, WHEN the terrible One* [*Chald.* the Oppreſſor] *is brought to nought, and the Scorner is conſumed.*

§ 10. From the fore-cited Paſſage it appears, that the *Scribes* were ſo intoxicated, blinded and drunk with the Opinion of their own Learning, and their vain Syſtems and traditional Knowledge, that they could ſee no Excellence or Beauty, in the Word of the Lord prophetical. But upon the Occaſion, of its croſſing their receiv'd Tenets, and blemiſhing the Credit of their Learning, they judged themſelves wiſer than their Maker, and therefore rejected his Voice, ſlighting all Prophecy or Inſpiration, as unintelligible to them. Wherefore, ſevere judicial Blindneſs and Confuſion is denounced upon them, whilſt there is a Promiſe of triumphing Grace, to be conferr'd upon the ſimpler Sort. In like manner, the People's not knowing the Judgments of the Lord, is laid expreſly at the Door of the *Scribes* by *Jeremiah*; their ſovereign Lord upbraiding them for Arrogancy againſt Him, *Chap.* viii. 7--9. thus; *How do ye ſay, we are wiſe, and the Law of the Lord, is WITH US? Lo! certainly* [*Vulg. Lat.* The falſe Pen of the *Scribes* has indited a Lie] *in vain made he it; the Pen of the Scribe* [*Chald.* to falſify the Scripture] *is in vain. The wiſe Men are aſhamed, they are diſmayed and taken*; [*or* catched;] *lo! they have rejected* [*Chald.* deteſted, *Heb. Sa.* contemned] *the Word*

Word of the Lord, and what Wiſdom is in them? or, what is Wiſdom to them?

§ 11. Thus alſo in the New Teſtament, we find the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, the Learned of that Age, purſuing our Saviour with endleſs Objections, and captious enſnaring Queſtions, but never allowing any thing to be ſufficient to convince them of his Meſſiahſhip: Except once, when they made the inſulting Demand to Him on the Croſs, that if He would come down to them from thence, they, even they, would believe on Him. But for the Temper they were in, to admit ſuch Evidence, as God ſaw fit to give them, we find them charged, *Luke* xi. 48, 52. with *approving the Deeds of their Fathers, who killed the Prophets*, and with *taking away* [*Some Copies read*, hiding] *the Key of Knowledge*; (that is, the Scripture) and as they entred not into the *Kingdom* themſelves, ſo *thoſe that were entring in, they forbad.* So that it appears, they were leſs capable than any other Men, of ſubmitting to our Maſter's Doctrine, *except a Man humble himſelf, and become as a little Child, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. xviii. 3. And this even becauſe they thought themſelves already, Eyes to the Blind; and as themſelves were above the being taught immediately of God, they expected alſo, that it ſhould be concluſive too for the People's Faith, when they ſaid, *Have any of the Scribes and Phariſees believ'd on him?* Wherefore, our great Prophet warns his Diſciples, *to beware of the Leaven of their Doctrine*; and 'tis plain in Effect, that his Followers were of the ſimpler, and illiterate Sort of People; for ſo our Redeemer ſays, Mat. xi. 25, 26. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe Things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto Babes.* Whereas then, the Teſtimony of the Scripture was clear, and our Lord appeal'd to it, for Proof that He was the Meſſiah, as well as to his miraculous Works, to juſtify *that* his Claim. I cannot ſee, how they, the Leaders of the People, found Means to juſtify themſelves before Men, in the rejecting of Him; as 'tis apparent (from the Paucity of the Believers, after his Crucifixion) they did; without ſome plauſible Topicks of reaſoning, either againſt the Manner of his Appearance, or ſome Difficulties in his Doctrine. The Hiſtory of his Life ſhews us, I think, this was the Caſe; and the Reputation of their Wiſdom, for interpreting the Law, and of their critical Learning in the Comments and Traditions of the Elders, was the Occaſion of their

their own Blindneſs, and Hardneſs of Heart to believe; and ſo, drew along with it, the Infidelity of the Nation in general.

§ 12. Thus then, as in the Old Teſtament, the *Scribes* and letter'd Doctors of the Law, are eſpecially charged, with the innocent Blood of the Prophets, and the Infidelity of the Nation in our Saviour's Time, is chiefly imputable to them; ſo in the ſpreading of Chriſtianity, the quaint Philoſophers of *Athens* (the Eye of *Greece*) tho' for Curioſity, they gave St. *Paul* the hearing, (which was however, an Inſtance of their Civility) notwithſtanding the Helleniſtical Gift of Argument the Apoſtle was poſſeſſed of, and that the Spirit condeſcended to plead with them, from their own Authors; yet the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks* were both ſo fond of their old beloved Syſtems, that they hindred any Church from being there ſettled, as in other Places; altho' in other Places alſo, not many wiſe, not many well-bred were called, for ſo it ſeemed good in God's Sight, who reſiſteth the proud, and extends Grace to the humble. But that this was alſo the Caſe among the Heathen, we may eaſily gather from an attentive reading, 1 *Cor.* Firſt and Second Chapters; where 'tis ſaid, that the *Natural Man* (Ψυχικος, the ſouliſh or rational) *receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are Fooliſhneſs to him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*; and to that rational Man, is there applied the Text of *Iſaiah*, *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit; for the Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God* only. *Now*, ſays he, *we have receiv'd the Spirit, which is of God, that we might* (tho' others cannot) *know the Things, that are freely given to us of God.* Which agrees exactly with our Lord's Words, ſubjoined to his Acknowledgement, that God had hid them from the wiſe and prudent, and revealed them to Babes; *no Man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither knoweth any Man the Father* (revealed) *but the Son, and he to whomſoever the Son will reveal him*, Mat. xi. 26.

§ 13. Therefore, the rational Man, while he ſtood entirely upon that foot (ſeeking with the *Greeks* after Wiſdom in their Way, and expecting to have every thing made out to him, by clear Demonſtrations of reaſoning) it appears, ſtood thereby, in a direct Oppoſition to the Will

Will and Council of God. For, ſays the Apoſtle there, *Chriſt ſent me to preach the Goſpel, not with Wiſdom or Excellency* (that is, perſwaſible Words) *of Speech, for after that the Worldly Wiſdom knew not God,* (in his Wiſdom,) *it pleaſed Him* (and who ſhall inſtruct Him?) *to chooſe the fooliſh Things of the World to confound the wiſe, and the weak Things of the World to confound the mighty, and baſe Things of the World, and Things the moſt deſpiſed, and Things which are not, to bring to nought Things that ARE, and by the Fooliſhneſs of Preaching to ſave them that believe.* And now, ſays the Apoſtle, *let no Fleſh glory in his Preſence,* for 'tis apparent, that, *the Fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than Men, and the Weakneſs of God is ſtronger than Men; hath not he made fooliſh the Wiſdom of this World? and where is the Diſputer of it? where is the wiſe? where is the Scribe?* Which laſt Words, Mr. *Lock* paraphraſes, " Where is the Philoſopher, skilled in the Wiſdom of the *Greeks?* Where, the Scribe, ſtudied in the " Learning of the *Jews?* Where, the Profeſſor of human " Arts and Sciences? Hath not God rendred all the Learn- " ing and Wiſdom of this World, fooliſh and uſeleſs, for " the Diſcovery of Truths revealed? And on *Chap.* ii. " 14. he ſays, the Animal Man (Ψυχικος) is one that has " no higher Principles to build upon, than thoſe of natu- " ral Reaſon; but a Man who hath no other Help, but " his own natural Faculties (how much ſoever improved " by human Arts and Sciences) cannot receive the Truths " of the Goſpel (*or any Revelation*) which are made known " by another Principle, *viz.* the Spirit of God revealing " them; and therefore they ſeem fooliſh and abſurd, to " ſuch a Man. Nor can he, by the bare Uſe of his na- " tural Faculties, and the Principles of human Reaſon, " ever come to the Knowledge of them".

§ 14. It being thus manifeſt, from the Old and New Teſtament, that it is the uſual Way of the Spirit of God, in his Revelation, to run counter to the Tenour and Stream of human Wiſdom; there is little Occaſion of Aſtoniſhment, that the Perſons moſt celebrated for it, ſhould in all Ages, or at any Time, ſhew an uncommon and peculiar Averſion or Diſtaſte, to his Ways and Methods, and choſen Inſtruments therein. Nor is it to be admired, that illiterate People, who are bred up, to an habitual Reverence, of thoſe far ſuperior to them in Knowledge, ſhould generally be led by the Dictates of their Teachers, and in courſe, fall in with their Paſſions, againſt the Ways and inſig-

insignificant Instruments of God revealing. But whosoever hath Ears to hearken to, what the Spirit saith; He tells us by the Apostle, that our Faith is not to stand in the Wisdom of Man, seeing it is originally founded, upon the Wisdom simply of God revealing; having begun in the Spirit, 'tis preposterous to seek to be perfected or perfectly instructed, by the Flesh; for thus saith the Lord, in *Col.* ii. 20. *If ye be dead with Christ from the Elements of the World, why as tho' living in the World, do ye dogmatize* (δογματιζεσθε) that is, still teach, or submit to be taught by its Principles. Whoever is able, or will please to look into the Critical Annotators on this Text, that occur in *Pool*'s *Synopsis*, will find, that *the Elements of the World*, are by them construed to mean as well, the Prescriptions of human Philosophy, and any other Impositions of Men, as *Jewish* Ceremonies; and that the genuine Sense of the Word, *dogmatize*, does more properly respect the former; and so, the Caution of that Text runs, that we Christians should not subject our selves to, much less teach them. And here, I would pray the Reader to observe, that whenever I make mention of, *the Learned, the Commentators, Critical Expositors, Divines, or the like*, without specifying a Name, I shall henceforth refer my self to *Pool*'s *Synopsis*, as the best extant Authority collective, of that kind.

§ 15. However, as 'tis said of the Law; that it is good, if a Man use it rightly; the like may be justly said of Philosophy; that whilst it is employed, to search after natural Causes (its proper Objects) the same merits Commendation, and is here condemn'd only, when *Positions* are raised from it, about supernatural Things; as if by the establishing of *such*, Matters divine ought to be judged of, and decided by them. Now, in these Cases, Revelation being its own sole Judge, the Authority of God revealing ought to be vindicated, from the Usurpation of Philosophy, or natural Reason of Men. But what I am here proving is, that Men trained up to admit the Rules of Philosophy, and to the Study of, and arguing upon, any Sort of Systems or Tenets derived from it; do find it very hard, to unlearn their Education, and become as little Children, when God authoritatively claims their Regard, to his extraordinary Hand. And they being under more Disadvantage than others, even on that very Account for which they value themselves, and are also valued by others, the Wonder ceases, that the Wise and Learn-

Learned ſhould have always moſt oppoſed God revealing. Mr. *Dodwel*, in his Diſſertations on *Cyprian*, *p.* 121. deſcribes to us the Temper of Philoſophers, in reſpect to the ſupernatural Things, remarkable among Chriſtians in the primitive Ages, thus; "They, ſays he, either from general Reaſonings, undervalued the Belief of every kind of "preternatural Things; or they denied all manner of "Certainty in them; or at leaſt, any Likelyhood of the "Truth of them; or elſe, they would not allow, there "were any Criterions, by which the true could be diſtinguiſhed from the Counterfeit. And indeed, that Univerſity which flouriſhed moſt, in the firſt Times of Chriſtianity, did diſown all manner of Certainty; ſo that "theſe admitted no Principles, by which any Facts could "be confirmed; and 'tis probable, that moſt Philoſophers "were of this latter ſort. Others, who would allow ſome "Topicks, whereon to prove Facts done, yet aſſerted "more Faith to be due, to their preconceiv'd Hypotheſes, "than to the Relation of any thing that paſs'd. There "were however ſome among the Philoſophers who were "willing to allow more to a ſuitable Atteſtation of Things "done then to their own Hypotheſes; but theſe had imbibed ſo baſe an Opinion of Chriſtians, they did not "think it worth while to enquire into any thing about "them. Inſomuch, that tho' altogether, they made ſuch "a Noiſe of REASON, in other Things, yet in Affairs reſpecting Chriſtianity, they would not permit "themſelves to be guided by it; no, nor ſo much as indulge that Curioſity, which is peculiarly natural to a "Philoſopher."

§ 16. Whether ſome Chriſtians afterwards, have not in ſucceeding Ages, contracted the like Principles from vain Philoſophy, and purſued the Pattern above-mention'd, with reſpect to ſome ſupernatural Occurrences among themſelves, will be enquired into more fully, in the Sequel of this Treatiſe; the Quotation above, is ſufficient to ſhew, the Antipathy there is between human Wiſdom, and that which ſpeaks in Revelation; and that they are inconſiſtent, in the very Foundation of each. And that the Caution general given by the Holy Ghoſt, againſt liſtening to, or teaching, the Elements of Worldly Philoſophy, was not without good Ground, left an Admonition to all Chriſtians, did appear even as early as the middle of the Second Century; for Proof whereof, I refer my ſelf to Dr. *Grabe's*

Specil.

Specil. Part I. *p.* 177. where *Juſtin Martyr*'s Diſcourſe upon the great Doctrine of the Reſurrection of the Body, argues thus; " Seeing, ſays he, our Adverſary the Devil, does " not deſiſt from aſſaulting Men, but indefatigably uſe " many Arts to enſnare them, both to withdraw Believers " from the Faith, and to keep Infidels from believing. I " thought it neceſſary, for the Sake of the Weak, to have " our ſelves armed with the invincible Words of Faith, " that we may oppoſe them, who by twiſting together a " great deal of Sophiſtry (*reciting here ſeveral Phyloſophical* " *Arguments they uſed*) and blending it with ſome Texts " of Scripture, do endeavour to turn Men away, from " the Faith of the Reſurrection of the Body. Some Chri- " ſtians argue, that it is impoſſible; not conſidering that " they therein are Believers only in Profeſſion, but in Fact " do demonſtrate themſelves Infidels, nay, more Infidel " than the Heathen. For thoſe, who believe in Idols, are " perſwaded, all Things are poſſible to them; much more, " ought we to believe in our God. As to Chriſtians there- " fore, 'tis enough for us to ſay, we believe; and we " need, even to beg Pardon of the Children of Truth, " when in reſpect to Infidels, we uſe foreign human Ar- " guments, to demonſtrate it poſſible: (*Then he proceeds to* " *uſe ſuch Arguments; but to Chriſtians, he ſays,*) The " WORD of Truth is free, and ſtands upon his own " Right, nor will ſubject it ſelf to the Probation of Rea- " ſoning, or ſuffer it ſelf to undergo a Trial, by ſuch " Demonſtration with the Hearers; for the Word of " Truth is ſent from God, who will have the Excellence " and Certainty of it, entruſted to Himſelf, who ſends it. " Seeing there is no Demonſtration, that comes up to the " Certainty there is in God, therefore the Prerogative He " aſſumes, is not to be taxed with Arrogance, when what " is given out by that Authority, requires to be exempted, " from other Ways of Demonſtration. Wherefore, ſince " nothing is ſtronger, nothing more worthy of Credit " than Truth it ſelf, whoever inſiſts upon a Demonſtrati- " on thereof, is like to a Man, who ſeeks after a Demon- " ſtration of that, which ſtands apparent to his Senſes. " As to all human Affairs, the Atteſtation of the Senſes " is Evidence, and we by them or the Report of others " built upon them, do judge and determine; but, as " God is Truth, and an Intelligence perfect, the Words " Truth, we judge of by no other Thing, but rely upon " Him, as the Father of us all. His Son, the exiſting " WORD,

" WORD, came down to us, cloathed in Fleſh, ſhew-
" ing forth Himſelf and the Father, and giving unto us in
" Himſelf, the Reſurrection from the dead, and after it
" eternal Life; wherefore, thoſe that follow Him, and
" have known Him, do repoſe themſelves in Him, hold-
" ing their Faith on Him, for DEMONSTRATI-
" ON."

§ 17. Now, that *Reaſon* ought not to be admitted, to ſit as Judge upon *Revelation*, as *Juſtin* the *Martyr* here hints; appears from the Danger, unto which many other ſacred Doctrines, (as well as that abovemention'd) whereon the Faith of a Chriſtian is built, would be expoſed, if they be allowed to be controverted, upon the Principles of Philoſophy. Particularly that, of the Divine Foreknowledge, in its Conſiſtency with the free Agency of Man: Thus alſo, all the Paſſages in the Prophetical Parts of Scripture, either fulfilled already, or ſtill remaining to be ſo, ever were and are, purely the Subjects of Faith, which can receive no Aid therein from Philoſophy; the Knowledge of God's expreſs Will, his Council and Deſigns, and every thing that comes under the Head of inſtituted Laws upon Mankind, is built wholly upon Revelation; and therefore requires, that Reaſoning from the Dictates of Philoſophy, be deem'd uſeleſs touching them. The celebrated and honourable Mr. *Boyl*, makes it a very doubtful Queſtion, whether bare *Reaſon* ever did, or can, arrive at ſo much, as to aſſure us, that there are ſuch Beings in Nature, as Angels, whereof the Scripture treats ſo largely. And ſeeing that a great Part of Holy Writ depends upon their Agency, how dangerous muſt it then be, to exalt Philoſophy, and apply the Rules of it to Divine Things? And indeed, if there were no other Inſtance, of the diſmal Havock that has occurred in the Church, by ſuffering the Points of Faith to be debated in the Liſts of Natural Reaſoning, than that one ſacred Myſtery of the Trinity; the Devaſtation has been ſo dreadful, that it had been happy for Chriſtians, if they had adhered to the Definition of the WORD revealing, being his own DEMONSTRATION.

§ 18. But in reference to the Reaſoning in Men, and the Rectitude of it ſo much boaſted, as if the ſame were a fit Rule, to judge of God by, Mr, *Boyle*'s Reconcilment of *Reaſon* and *Revelation* tells us, " The Underſtanding of
" Man,

" Man, is not ſincerely diſpoſed, to receive the Light of " Truth; but receives an Infuſion (as it were) of adven- " titious Colours, from the Will and Affections (that diſ- " guiſe the Light) which makes him ſooner believe thoſe " Things that he is deſirous ſhould be true, and reject ma- " ny others, upon Accounts, that do no ways infer their " being falſe; wherefore, we may juſtly ſuſpect, that the " Generality of Men, have ſome ſecret Propenſities to err " about Divine Things; and Indiſpoſitions to admit " Truths, which not only detect the Weakneſſes of our " Nature, and our perſonal Diſabilities, and thereby of- " fend or mortify our Pride, and our Ambition; but " ſtrongly tend, to diſcover to our ſelves and others, our " Vices and Faults, and oftentimes to croſs our Deſigns " and Intereſts. And if we conſider the Inbred Pride of " Man, (which is ſuch, that if we believe the ſacred Sto- " ry, even *Adam* in Paradice affected to be like God) " we ſhall not ſo much marvel, that almoſt every Man in " particular, makes the Notions he has entertained alrea- " dy, and his Senſes, his Inclinations and his Intereſts, the " Standards, by which he eſtimates and judges all other " Things, whether natural or revealed. So that, we " may juſtly complain, that Men ſeek all the Knowledge " they care to find, or will admit, either in theſe little " Worlds *themſelves*, or from that great World, the Uni- " verſe, but not from the Omniſcient Author of them " both. Wherefore, when we make mention of the *Di- " ctates of right Reaſon*, and pretend to unbyaſs'd Under- " ſtandings; we are to remember, that our intellectual " Weakneſſes, or our Prejudices, or Prepoſſeſſion by Cu- " ſtom, by Education, *&c.* our Intereſt, Paſſions, Vices, " and I know not how many other Things, have ſo great " and ſwaying an Influence on them, that there are ve- " ry few Concluſions that we make, or Opinions that we " eſpouſe, that are ſo much the pure Reſults of our Rea- " ſon, that no perſonal Diſability, Prejudice or Fault, has " any Intereſt in them."

§ 19. The lively Picture of the Idol, REASON, drawn as above, ſerves well to explain to us that of St. *Paul*, how it comes, that *the Natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, nor can he know them.* But as the Diſcourſe preceding, chiefly intimates, that the Moral Corruption of Man's Reaſon are ſuch, as muſt neceſſarily

ceſſarily render it, a very incompetent Judge of the Things of God revealed; ſo the ſame Author adds, " Concerning " the Natural Imbecility of the human Intelect, that it is " ſuch, that the moſt piercing Wits, and excellent Ma- " thematicians are forced to confeſs, that not only their " own Reaſon, but that of Mankind, may be puſled and " nonpluſſed about QUANTITY, which is an Ob- " ject of Contemplation natural, nay, Mathematical. " Wherefore, *ſays he*, why ſhould we think it unfit to be " believ'd, and to be acknowledged, that in the Attributes " of God (*or his extraordinary Operations*) there ſhould be " ſome Things, that our finite Underſtandings cannot " clearly comprehend. And we, who cannot clearly com- " prehend how, in our ſelves two ſuch diſtant Natures, " as that of a groſs Body and immaterial Spirit, ſhould be " united ſo, as to make up one Man? why ſhould we " grudge to have our REASON, Pupil to an Om- " niſcient Inſtructor, who can teach us ſuch Things, as " neither our own meer Reaſon, nor any others, could ever " have diſcover'd to us?

§ 20. But becauſe even in the revealed Ways of God, and touching them, we ſhall find in the Sequel of this Treatiſe, that we are often ſummon'd to bow down to this Idol, REASON; We that ſtubbornly refuſe ſuch Allegiance, being the Subjects of another Sovereign, do refer our ſelves to the above cited Characters of its moral Corruption, and native Imbecility. We further plead, the many Injuries accruing to ſeveral Doctrines of the Chriſtian Faith, debaſed with the Mixture of Philoſophical Principles. We plead alſo a Liberty from ſerving this Tyrant, becauſe of the manifold Teſtimony of our Maſter the WORD; touching the Oppoſition to Him, of Worldly Science falſly ſo call'd; vain Philoſophy and Wiſdom. And ſeeing, that our Divine Schoolmaſter has told us, that God is unſearchable in his Ways, and paſt finding out unto Perfection; and one of the firſt Form in our School, owns, *he knew but in part, and ſaw as thro' a Glaſs darkly*; we cannot admit other, and oppoſing Maſters, to preſcribe us Rules, how to judge of Things revealed, by. We are content to wait indeed, the happy Time, when we ſhall ſee as *Face to Face*, in Compariſon to what we now do; tho' even in that moſt bliſsful State, we have no further Hope, than to be like to, and equal (at moſt) with Angels; who yet in their near Approaches, are repreſen-

ted to us, as covering their Faces, not able to ſupport under the dazzling Brightneſs of Majeſty ſupreme.

§ 21. We oppoſe not, neither reject any Teachers, further than they are *other* than our Lord the WORD; the Dogmaes and Traditions, according to the Dictates of our ſole Maſter and Dictator, we own; and oppoſe ſuch dogmatizing only, as is contrary to them. But we conceive, it was a Supplication worthy of one Apoſtle, in bowing his Knees to the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that *we being rooted and grounded in Love, might comprehend with all Saints, and know the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Heighth of the Love of Chriſt*, tho' at the ſame Time he ſubjoins, that, *it paſſeth Knowledge.* It was alſo an Exhortation, not unworthy of an other, that we ſhould *grow in the Knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Pet.* iii. 18. Tho' after we are grown to ſomething of a Manhood in that Science, we may ſtill be allow'd to imitate the inſpir'd King, ſaying, *Such Knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it*, Pſal. cxxxvi. 6. It is the Spirit alone, abſtractedly taken, that fully *ſearcheth the deep Things of God*; for the Prophets themſelves are ſet before us, 1 *Pet.* i. 11, 12. in the Poſture of *enquiring and ſearching diligently after the Signification of what the Spirit of Chriſt in them did teſtify*; and the very Angels themſelves, are there affirmed, to be *deſirous to look into them:* Which intimates that they are far from penetrating to the Bottom of thoſe Deeps. Wherefore we look upon it, an Effect and Mark of Ignorance, as well as Preſumption, when we hear every little Mortal offer to talk of the Ways of God concluſively; as if he, even he, were the Man, that with one ſingle Act of Intuition, could pierce thro' them all.

§ 22. What we conceive of our Duty is, that whenever we ſpeak of God, we are to ſtand in Awe, how we determine touching Him; and not by an over-weening Opinion of the *little Self*, preſume, that we have a PERFECT Knowledge of every thing in Him, whereof we have ſome Knowledge: And this we are to do, ſo much the rather, becauſe tho' we build upon the true Foundation, we are forwarned of a Day, 1 *Cor.* iii. 12, 13. that *ſhall declare what is Wood, Hay and Stubble, and a Fire that ſhall diſtinguiſh them, from the Gold, Silver, and precious Stones.* Which Diſtinction of Things to be conſumed from

rom thoſe that are to remain, if I conſtrue it to be accompliſhed in this World, and the former Sort of them, to mean the Philoſophical and merely human Superſtructures, on the ſimple Word of Chriſt, I am not without, even learned Atteſtations. And indeed, the Scope of the two preceding Chapters, and what follows in this, ſeem to be ſufficient to warrant it; wherefore I recommend the ſame to the further Conſideration of the Students in Theology.

§ 23. From all that has been ſaid, the State of the Argument ſuppoſes, that there are among the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, many that ſtand in the Character of the Natural Man; that is, ſuch an One as acts by no other Rule and Guidance, than that of his perſonal Reaſon, and in conſequence he rejects whatſoever is above, or ſeems contrary to it. We have ſeen already, many Inſtances even in the natural World, wherein the meer Light of Reaſon affords but a looſe and ſandy Foundation for the Judgment to build upon, even in thoſe things; inſomuch that among the groſſeſt Parts of the Creation, the moſt bold and piercing Wits are forced (when driven) to confeſs, that the Reaſon of all Mankind, may be puſled and nonpluſſed about them. And Mr. *Boyle* in his Tract abovecited ſays, that, *even in natural Things, Philoſophers themſelves do, and muſt admit ſeveral Things, whereof they cannot explicate, or perhaps conceive the Modus.* If ſo, why do the Worſhippers of Reaſon, (every one of whom makes a Deity of himſelf) upbraid the Chriſtian's Faith with Abſurdity, for admitting That in Supernaturals, which he himſelf does in Natural Things? If the Philoſopher acknowledges the Conjunction of an Immaterial Spirit with a groſs Body, tho' he cannot explicate the *Modus* or Manner how 'tis formed; why ſhould it be more incredible, that the Eternal Spirit unites it ſelf to the human, in Revelation, meerly becauſe the manner of this adventitious Union, is alſo, without full Demonſtration, to our Comprehenſions?

§ 24. But Revelation being the Foundation, whereon the Faith, Hope, and Acting of all Believers is built; that we may not be miſunderſtood in what we mean, when we allow, that the Manner of it is without full Demonſtration to our Underſtandings; it is requiſite, once more to cite the Words of Mr. *Boyle*. "It may be ſeaſonable to

" conſider, what kind of Probation, or what Degree of " Evidence, may reaſonably be thought ſufficient to make " Revelation fit to be embraced. Now, *ſays he*, beſides " the Demonſtrations wont to be treated of in vulgar Lo- " gick, (*I ſuppoſe he means Mathematical, and ſuch as are* " *atteſted by the Senſes)* there are among Philoſophers, " three diſtinct Kinds, or Degrees of Demonſtration. " *Firſt*, there is a Metaphyſical Demonſtration, where the " Concluſion is manifeſtly built on thoſe general Meta- " phyſical Axioms; that can never be other than true. " *Secondly*, Phyſical Demonſtrations, where the Concluſi- " on is evidently deduced from Phyſical Principles, " which are not ſo abſolutely certain, as the former. " *Thirdly*, There are Moral Demonſtrations, ſuch as thoſe, " where the Concluſion is built upon ſome one Moral " Proof, cogent in its Kind, or ſome Concurrence of " Probabilities, that it cannot be but allowed, ſuppoſing " the Truth of the moſt receiv'd Rules of Prudence, and " Principles of Practical Philoſophy. And this third kind " of Probation, tho' it comes behind the two others in " Certainty; yet it is the ſureſt Guide, which the Actions " of Men have regularly allowed them to follow: And " this is remarkable in Moral Demonſtrations, that " ſuch may conſiſt, and be as it were made up of ſeve- " ral Particulars, that are each of them aſunder, but pro- " bable; becauſe it is thought reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that " tho' each Teſtimony *ſingle* be but probable, yet a Con- " currence of ſuch Probabilities may well amount to a " Moral Certainty, ſince the very Concurrence ought in " Reaſon to be attributed to the Truth of what they jointly " tend to prove. Now, to apply theſe Things to the " Chriſtian Revelation, if you conſider, that it is as ab- " ſurd and improper a Thing to require Mathematical " Demonſtrations in Moral Affairs, as to take up with " Moral Arguments, in Matters Mathematical; you will " not deny, but that thoſe Articles of the Chriſtian Reli- " gion, that can be proved by a Moral, tho' not by a " Metaphyſical, or Phyſical Demonſtration; may without " any Blemiſh to a Man's Reaſon, be aſſented to.

§ 25. According to this Explanation of Moral Demonſtration; the Natural Man has a ſimple Capacity in his Rational Faculty, to aſſent to Revelation, upon Moral Proofs of it. Whereon, we ought to conſider, that the honourable Author who allows ſuch a Capacity, takes the Style

Style of a Philoſopher; and when he ſays, that in a Concurrence of Probabilities, a Moral Proof of Revelation cannot but be allowed; he ſuppoſes, that the moſt receiv'd Rules of Prudence, and the Principles of Practical Philoſophy, are previouſly admitted. But the Apoſtle, when he ſays, that a Natural Man *cannot know the Things of the Spirit of God*, it is to be underſtood of that univerſal Corruption which has infected the natural Capacity, ſo that without ſome ſpecial Grace, it cannot maſter that Corruption. Nevertheleſs, ſeeing there is ſuch an inherent Capacity in Man, to aſſent to Revelation upon Moral Proofs of it; an Indulgence from the Will of thoſe Corruptions that vitiate the Capacity, draws down Guilt upon the Heads of the Indulgers, as often as the Author of Nature, and ſupreme Lawgiver and Judge, ſets before them, ſuch Proofs of his revealed Will. For it cannot be controverted, that the Father of us all, has a Sovereign Right to ſignify his Will, whenſoever He pleaſes, to his Creatures; and it is an Original Debt, owing from all Rational Natures, that their Underſtanding and Will ſhould bow down, and pay Obeyſance to that of the Father of Light, and of all Being, when it is ſo ſignified to them.

§ 26. Faith then, which is deſcribed to us, to be *the Evidence of Things not ſeen*, is a ſupernatural Grace conferr'd on Believers from above; and is the Ground and Confidence of Things hoped for; tho' without Mathematical, Metaphyſical and Phyſical Demonſtrations, or ſuch as are clear to our Senſes. However, we may to the meer Natural Man ſay, that we have Moral Demonſtrations to ſhew; either One very cogent in its kind, or a Concurrence of ſeveral probable ones, of like ſort, ſuch as are allowed univerſally a ſufficient Foundation, for the Guidance of Men, in Things Natural and Civil of the greateſt Moment. And herein, the crooked Partiality and Iniquity of Men merely rational, is evident, that tho they can and do act in other Points, without ſuch Certainty of Demonſtration, and often frame Concluſions, even without ſuch Moral Proofs: Yet in the Things of God, that come with an imperative Authority, to blaſt their own Pride, and curb their Paſſions, and overthrow their Worldly Intereſts, they then pretend, that their REASON cannot allow them to ſubmit to the Giver of it; thereby not fearing to accuſe their Maker. One would think, it

might indeed ſeem worthy to be admitted, for the firſt Principle of all Reaſon, that the Author of it, as the ſupreme Intelect, muſt have more Underſtanding; and in Conſequence, whenever He vouchſafes new Rays of Light, diſplayed from above, it were the Happineſs and Joy of every Man, to open his Breaſt readily to the Influence thereof; becauſe their very Creation being an Effect of his Goodneſs, He ought not to be judged capable of meaning Hurt to them: But on the contrary, both able and diſpoſed to render them more happy. And in Effect, thoſe that with the whole Heart believe, do find it thus in themſelves, during this preſent Life; even in that *Peace* (given in) *which paſſeth all Underſtanding*, of them that ha'n't it; and that Joy which no Man can take from us; and that Love which is triumphant over all Calamities, even Death it ſelf.

§ 27. It is ſaid by St. *Paul* to the *Athenians*, that the Times of preceding Ignorance among the *Gentiles*, God winked at; but after the Evangelical Commiſſion, to command all Men to repent, becauſe of a Judgment declared that ſhould be paſſed upon them, we conclude the Rejecters of that Authority, were no longer excuſable, from any indulged Ignorance, any more than the *Jews* in rejecting the Meſſiah. Wherefore, the Scoffers of Revelation now, under the Pretext of Reaſon, ought not to preſume themſelves, to be in like Condition with thoſe, who never heard of that Summons, upon the Authority of Revelation. But as to the Principles, whereon our Faith of God revealing, is from the Scripture built, it were to be wiſhed, that there was nothing generally predominant among Chriſtians, that juſtly miniſter'd Occaſion of hardening the open Contemners of all revealed Religion. It is certain, that by the Words of St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* vi. 14, 16. *He that believeth hath no more Part with an Infidel, than Light hath Communion with Darkneſs, or Chriſt hath Concord with Belial, or the Temple of God hath Agreement with Idols.* What therefore, the State of the Chriſtian Church hath long been, and at this Day is, with Reſpect to that Faith of the Apoſtles and Prophets, I mean the Faith of God the WORD revealing, we purpoſe in this Treatiſe to enquire. In order to which, as the firſt Step, it is abſolutely neceſſary, to ſearch into the Scripture, for the Accounts given us there, of the various Manners, and different Ways, whereby the Inviſible God, did con-

vey

vey his Oracles to Men. For, whenever there was ſuch a Communication of the Divine Will to Men, of indiſpenſible Neceſſity, there was ſome Way uſed, wherein the ſame was conveyed. But as Infidelity conſiſted by the Scripture-Definition of it, in rejecting the Word of the Lord, entruſted to the Prophet, either, by the Apparition of Angels, or by Dreams, or by Viſions, or by Voices heard, or by Inſpiration Prophetick; and thro' his ſubſervient Inſtrumentality divulged; we ſhall now proceed, minutely to examine, what the Holy Writings do demonſtrate to us, upon thoſe Heads ſeverally; that we may be able to jndge more diſtinctly, what Faith our Sovereign Lord and Maker, did require from his Creatures, upon that Occaſion, and wherein their Guilt conſiſted, in refuſing a Subjection to Him, when it was ſo claimed.

CHAP. II.

Of the Apparition of Angels in Scripture.

WHEN the Almighty began his Speech to *Job*, out of the Whirl-wind, He ſaid, *Chap.* xxxviii. 7. That at his laying the Foundations of this Earth, *the Morning Stars* [*Gr.* all his Angels, *Chald.* all the Troops of Angels] *ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy. Daniel*, when he beheld the Antient of Days, ſitting on his Throne, *Chap.* vii. 10. he ſaw *Thouſand thouſands miniſtring unto Him, and Ten thouſand times Ten thouſand ſtanding before Him*; and St. *John* ſaw and heard the ſame Number, *Rev.* v. 11. joining in an Anthem, to the Praiſes of the Lamb. All which, *are miniſtring Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them, who ſhall inherit Salvation, Heb.* i. 14. And indeed the very Word, both in *Hebrew* and *Greek*, ſignifying an Angel, means equally a Meſſenger. Therefore are they repreſented in the Poſture of Servants, ſtanding about the Throne, ready to receive Orders. Thus, one of them ſtiles himſelf, the Fellow-ſervant of *John*, and of his Brethren the Prophets, *Rev.* xxii. 9. And their excellent Qualities for that Service, are finely expreſs'd by the *Chaldee*, on *Pſal.* civ. 4. *Who maketh his*

Meſſengers ſwift as the Wind, his Miniſters ſtrong as the flaming Fire. Thus then, when a Saint is at Prayer here below, *Dan.* ix. 21. even while the Words are ſpeaking, the Wings of a *Gabriel* can reconcile the immenſe Diſtance, from the Throne above, to this lower World. Another could come down in a Night, 2 *Kings* xix. 35. and before Day ſtrew the Camp of the *Aſſyrians*, with One hundred eighty five Thouſand dead Corpſes. And if their Puiſſance be ſuch, what then will be the Terror of that Day, when the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, ſhall lead on the Armies of Heaven (drawn up in Battalia) *to judge and make War, to ſmite the Nations, and to rule them with a Rod of Iron*, Rev. xix. 11, 18.

§ 2. Whether the ordinary Adminiſtration of Providence over Kingdoms and Nations, ought to be aſcrib'd to the Miniſtry of Angels, as ſome of the firſt Rank of Authors in the Chriſtian Church, have aſſerted from *Dan.* x. 13, 20. we remit to Enquiry. But, as to their Inſtrumentality for Good, to the Heirs of immortal Life, during their abode here, it can never fall under Queſtion among any, but thoſe, who believe the Scripture but by halves. Our great Prophet ſays, *Mat.* xviii. 10. *The Angels of Children do always behold the Face of his Father in Heaven*; which no ways excludes adult Perſons from the like Priviledge, but is there only apply'd to little Ones, as an Argument, why none ought to deſpiſe them. It was a general Opinion among the *Jews*, that every one of the Faithful, had an Angel, in Propriety, attending him; and many Chriſtians did very early adapt that Opinion, founding themſelves principally on this Text, tho' there be no ſuch Speciality expreſs'd in it: To ſome extraordinary Perſons indeed, there is much more ground to believe, there was an Angel properly aſſign'd them; as the Congregation of Believers ſuppos'd touching *Peter*, *Acts* xii. 15. that it was *his Angel* who appear'd at the Gate, aſſuming his Manner of Speech. So *Jacob* mentions One in ſpecial, *Gen.* xlviii. 16. ſaying, *The Angel which deliver'd me from all Evil.* The like ſeems to be hinted by *Eliſha*, 2 *Kings* vi. 16, 17. who knew who was with him, when he pray'd, that God would open the Eyes of his Servant, to ſee it. Other Arguments there want not, to prove the ſame.

§. 3. But to return to the vigilant Adminiſtration of Angels more General, the Pſalmiſt affirms by the Spirit,

Pſal.

Pſal. xxxiv. 7. that the Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them; a Repreſentation of which Encampment or Circumvallation, was ſhew'd to *Jacob*, *Gen.* xxxii. 1, 2. where he ſaid, *This is God's Camp.* And to *Eliſha*'s Servant as above, when he ſaw the Mountain cover'd with Horſes, and Chariots of Fire, round about *Eliſha*. But here let us obſerve, that a Viſionary Repreſentation, as theſe were; does not conclude, that every one of that Camp, or of thoſe Horſes and Chariots, was a diſtinct Angel: Tho' in another Place, *Pſal.* lxviii. 17. Angels are call'd the *Chariots of God*, which compoſe his numerous Army. Furthermore, for the Comfort of him who makes the Lord his Refuge, the Pſalmiſt ſays, *Pſal.* lxxxxi. 9, 11. *He ſhall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways*; but in reſpect to his Enemies, xxxv. 5, 6, prays, *Let them be as Chaff before the Wind, and let the Angel of the Lord chaſe them; let their Way be dark and ſlippery, and let the Angel of the Lord purſue them.* Under the ſame divine Inſpiration, in regard to publick Worſhip, it is ſaid, *Pſal.* cxxxviii. 1. *I will praiſe thee with my whole Heart; before the Angels* [*Gr. Æth. Vulg. Lat. Arab.*] *will I ſing Praiſe unto thee.* And as we believe, there is freſh Joy among them, upon the Repentance of a Sinner, ſo it needs muſt be, that they exult at the publick Prayers, and due reverencial Praiſes of the Saints. Wherefore, we find an Admonition, to the religious Diſcharge of a ſolemn Vow, from the Inſpection of an Angel preſent, at the making it, *Eccleſ.* v. 6. And, finally, from the like Superintendency of theirs, over the Conduct of Chriſtians, the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* v. 21. *adjures Timothy before the elect Angels*, to obſerve the Rules there preſcrib'd him: And that they do heedfully regard all that paſſeth in the Church on Earth, appears from *Eph.* iii. 10.

§ 4. Agreeable to theſe general Doctrines of their Preſence with, and propitious Care over, the Perſons of the Faithful, in Subſerviency to their Lord and ours; we have many Inſtances left us, for the Eſtabliſhment of our Faith therein. For thus, *Abraham* in diſmiſſing his Servant to *Chaldea*, *Gen.* xxiv. 7. encourageth him to go chearfully that Journey; from a Dependance, that the Lord God of Heaven, who had done ſuch mighty Things precedently for him, would ſend his Angel to ſucceed it. Thus *Jacob* on his Death-bed, in bleſſing the Sons of *Joſeph*,

ſeph, *Gen.* xlviii. 16. makes mention of the Angel that had deliver'd him from all Evil. Our ever bleſſed Redeemer, in his State of Humiliation, did not diſdain, in an Agony, to be ſtrengthned by an Angel, *Luke* xxii. 43. We read alſo of ſeveral of the Apoſtles, who were deliver'd out of Priſon, by the Miniſtry of an Angel, *Acts* v. 18, 19. By that of another, *Cornelius* is directed to his Converſion; and in like Manner, they officiouſly tranſlate the Soul of *Lazarus*, from its Dungeon of the Body, into the Boſom of *Abraham*. I ſhould not here make mention, of the ſignal Miniſtration of Angels, to the Church in the Wilderneſs, and eſpecially at the giving of the Law; and that *Moſes* was a Ruler and Deliverer, *by the Hand* (or Power) *of the Angel which appear'd in the Buſh*, *Acts* vii. 35. but that many need to be put in Mind, that under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, we are come to *an innumerable Company of Angels*, *Heb.* xii. 22. And that, the *Son of Man ſhall ſend his Angel with a great Sound of a Trumpet* (or as in Dr. *Mills*) *and a loud Voice*, Matth. xxiv. 31. to gather together his Elect, from the Four Winds. But to add no more here, it is upon the Foundation of the Doctrines abovemention'd, that we in the Church of *England*, are exhorted by the Collect for *Michaelmas*-Day, to pray, "O everlaſting God, who haſt ordain'd and conſtituted the Services of Angels and Men, in a wonderful Order; Mercifully grant, that as thy Holy Angels always do thee Service in Heaven; ſo by thy Appointment, they may ſuccour and defend us on Earth, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

§ 5. After ſo many expreſs and clear Declarations of the Word of God, and not of Men, touching the Agency of Angels, in the Courſe of Divine Providence, and their intent Inſpection into the Conduct of the Spiritual Worſhipers of Him; I am perſwaded, that the meer Rational Man, who believes none of theſe Things as revealed, will yet be ready to own, that could he believe them all, as Chriſtians pretend to do, he would not openly ſcoff at, and disbelieve any Agency of Angels, when they ſhew themſelves. For, may he ſay to the Believer, "Unleſs you can produce as many Texts for the Contempt of their Viſible Appearance now, as you own for it, formerly, and as you own at all Times, for their inviſible Inſtrumentality over Men; with what Conſiſtency of Principles do you act, when you ſcorn and hate any Man, for the occular Teſtimony

" ſtimony he now gives, that is confirmatory of your own " Tenets?" That which is ſeen, and which is heard, and which is felt, affords the cleareſt Proof that Men can require, for Evidence in any Caſe whatſoever: Wherefore, to purſue this Argument, if any now can give the like, for the Appearance and Agency of Angels, what is there that can be ſaid againſt it, but muſt at the ſame time, overturn all the receiv'd Rules of Juſtice and right Reaſon? In all other Points, wherein Evidence is admitted, touching what occurr'd to a Perſon, if that of the Eye, and Ear, and Touch be excluded; would not this be to invalidate every kind of Proof among Men? When, in *Acts* xii. 15. *Rhoda* told the Firſt Chriſtians, that *Peter* himſelf ſtood before the Gate, they ſaid, ſhe was mad, but allow'd, that it might be an Angel aſſuming his Form; how is it then, that we have ſo adapted the very Reverſe of their Principles, that he who ſhall pretend to ſee One, muſt be mad? Here then is one thing, wherein the modern Believer takes part with the unbelieving *Sadducee*; unleſs upon Examination it appears, that there was ſomething, in the appearing of Angels, recorded in Holy Writ, beyond any that may occurr again. Wherefore, in order to ſearch to the Root of Infidelity, we proceed to examine into the Text, touching that Matter.

§ 6. Firſt then, as to the Manner of their Appearance, we find it often in a Form, as well as Behaviour, ſo uſual and familiar to Men, that they were not known to be other than Men, for a Time; thus one of them addreſſing himſelf to *Hagar* at a Fountain in the Wilderneſs, beſpeaks her in a Friendly Sort, *Gen.* xvi. 8. *Hagar, Sarah's Maid, whence cameſt thou? And whither wilt thou go?* Another of theſe Heavenly Meſſengers, in his Speech to *Manoah's* Wife, *Judg.* xiii. 4--21, ſays familiarly, *beware I pray thee*; and was ſo far taken for a Man, that they offer'd to give him Meat; for *Manoah* knew not, that he was an Angel, till he diſappeared. Thus *Lot* alſo, at the City Gate receiv'd his Gueſts, no otherwiſe than as Travellers, and courteouſly invited them to his Houſe to lodge, *Gen.* xix. 1--10. They alſo appeared as beautiful Young Men to the Sodomites; and laſtly ſeem'd to eat of the Feaſt prepared for them. *Abraham* likewiſe addreſſed himſelf to thoſe whom he ſaw, as Paſſengers, and accordingly beſought them to waſh their Feet, and repoſe themſelves, until he prepared them ſome Refreſhment; and at length they alſo

ſo appeared to eat, *Gen.* xviii. 4, 8. Under the Diſguiſe, in like manner, of the human Nature, it is ſaid of the Angel to *Gideon*, that when he vaniſhed out of Sight, then, and not before, did *Gideon* perceive that he was ſo, *Judg.* vi. 21. Even thus, the Captain General of the Lord's Hoſt, did ſeem at firſt to *Joſhua* to be a Man only, with his Sword drawn, *Chap.* v. 13, 14. Wherefore, when *Paul* ſaw a Man in *Macedonian* Garb, who prayed him, ſaying, *Come over into Macedonia, and help us*, Acts xvi. 9. The Familiarity of the Appearance and Allocution to him, did not hinder, but that he aſſuredly gather'd from it, that the Lord had called him to that Country; any more than he doubted it to be an Angel, when he ſaw a Man named *Ananias* coming in to him, and laying Hands upon him, *Acts* ix. 12. And thus, when the Diſciples were looking ſtedfaſtly after their Lord aſcending up to Heaven, their Eyes no ſooner turned down again to Earth than they were entertained by two Cherubs, clothed like Men, and ſpeaking in the Style of ſuch; for they are call'd Men, *Acts* i. 10. Nevertheleſs, even when theſe Celeſtial Spirits, aſſume the moſt uſual Form and Manner of Men they know how to dart out ſome Diſplays of the Difference; which occaſion'd *Manoah*'s Wife to ſay, *the Countenance of the Man of God* (that is, a Prophet) *was like the Countenance of an Angel.* Sometimes the Suddenneſs or Unexpectedneſs of the Apparition, expreſſed by the Words the Angel of the Lord *came upon* ſuch and ſuch, ſeems to have cauſed ſome Affrightment by the Surprize, where nothing elſe in the Viſion is mention'd, that could affect with Terror; ſometimes alſo the Suddenneſs of their Diſappearance, after they had been preſumed for Mortals wrought an Impreſſion of Fear, upon the Reflection. Of both which Caſes, there are Inſtances, which the curious may eaſily remark. But I proceed next to their more refulgent Manifeſtations.

§ 7. In ſeveral of the Inſtances above given, it may be obſerved, that after thoſe Seraphick Agents had for a while veiled themſelves, under the human Shades, they let out ſome Glimpſes of their ſuperior State; but at other Times, tho' they took a Likeneſs to human Form, in their appointed Aſſociation with Men, the Diſguiſe was not ſo much as queſtionable. As when *David*, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 16. ſaw the Angel ſtanding between the Earth and Heaven, having a drawn Sword in his Hand, ſtretched out;

out: Or, when the Angel of the Lord came upon *Peter*, *Acts* xii. 7. ſtriking him on the Side, while aſleep, and a Light ſhined in the Priſon. But more expreſly, when 'tis ſaid *Luke* i. 12. ſomething in the Apparition troubled *Zacharias*, and Fear fell on him, before he was ſtruck deaf and dumb, for his Unbelief. Thus alſo it was, that the Shepherds were ſore afraid, when the Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the Glory of the Lord ſhone round about them, in the Night, *Luke* ii. 9. And thus more reſplendently yet, in *Mat.* xxviii. 24. when the Angel of the Lord deſcended from Heaven, and a great Earthquake attended his coming to roll back the Stone, from the Door of the Sepulchre; for when he ſat upon it, his Countenance was like Lightning, and for Fear of Him the Keepers did ſhake, and become as dead Men. And accordingly, in other Texts, where the Women are recited to attend the Sepulchre, they are ſaid to have been amaz'd, affrighten'd, to tremble, and to fly with Fear, at the Sight. But in theſe, and a Multitude of other like Occaſions, the Graciouſneſs to Men, of the Divine Oeconomy over Spirits, is to be admired; in that thoſe refulgent Miniſters, in their Approach to weak Mortals, when the Mind of theſe, is duly impreſſed with the Dignity of the Meſſenger, and the Majeſty of Him, whom they repreſent; then comes in favourably, a Salutation by Name, as *Mary*, *Cornelius*, and the like, FEAR NOT; and with theſe Words, reviving Strength is conveyed; of which the following Inſtance is further conſpicuouſly pregnant. We read concerning *Daniel*, Chap. x. 5--19. that he being by *the Side of a great River, lift up his Eyes, and beheld a certain Man clothed in Linnen, whoſe Loyns were girded with fine Gold, his Body alſo was like the Beryl, and his Face as the Appearance of Lightning, and his Eyes as Lamps of Fire, and his Arms and his Feet like in Colour to poliſhed Braſs, and the Voice of his Words like the Voice of a Multitude. Daniel alone ſaw the Viſion, for the Men that were with him ſaw it not, but a great quaking fell upon them, ſo that they fled to hide themſelves.* He being *left alone, there remained no Strength in him; for his Vigour was turned into Corruption, and when he heard the Voice of the* Angelick *Words, he fell into a deep Sleep, with his Face upon the Ground. And behold, a Hand touched him, that ſet him upon his Knees, and the Palms of his Hands; and the Angel ſaid, O Daniel, a Man greatly beloved, for unto thee am I now ſent, ſtand upright; and when he had ſaid*

that

that Word, Daniel ſtood up trembling; then he ſaid, fear not, Daniel; but when ſome other Words followed, *Daniel ſet his Face toward the Ground, and became dumb:* And behold, *one like the Similitude of the Sons of Men, touched his Lips and his Speech was reſtored.* Then he ſaid to the Angel, *O my Lord, by the Viſion, my Sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no Strength, neither is there Breath left in me, how can thy Servant talk with this my Lord? Then, there came again, one like the Appearance of a Man, and touched and ſtrengthen'd him* the fourth and fifth Time; after all which, his Vigour was reſtored fully, by a concluding Salutation, *O Man, greatly beloved, fear not, Peace be unto thee; be ſtrong, yea, be ſtrong.*

§ 9. The laſt recited Intercourſe of *Daniel* with the Angel, is ſtiled by him, a GREAT VISION; which Character of it, I rather judge to be affixed thereto, from the Majeſty of the Angelick Apparition, and the enfeebling extatick Effects on himſelf, than the Subject therein contain'd. Upon an other Viſion alſo, *Chap* viii. 27. *Daniel* tells us, he fainted, and was ſick certain Days; wherefore, thoſe Effects on the human Body, are not to be adjudged, Impreſſions incompatible with the Appearance and Operation of a Kind and Heavenly Agent; for theſe did not hinder, but *Daniel* even by ſuch a Manifeſtation, was demonſtrated to be a Man greatly beloved of God. Nor do ſuch Things, derogate at all from the Goodneſs of our Heavenly Father, even to the Perſon in Particular; much leſs reflect, upon his paternal Tenderneſs in General. On the other ſide, whereas, many have dreſſed up the Appearance of an Angel, ſo neceſſarily terrible, as if that the human Nature neither ever could nor can ſupport, under the Majeſty of it, without falling *into a Trance*, or temporary Suppreſſion of the Sences; we find, by many of the preceding Relations, nothing at all of that kind, attending ſuch an Appearance. And as others again would have it, that all kind of Familiarity, in the Manner and Form and Expreſſions of a Spirit, when ſhewing himſelf viſible to Mankind, is a ſufficient Mark to denominate an evil One; the contrary is made evident at large, *Sect.* 6. And becauſe the Supporters of that Opinion plead, the Term uſed in 1 *Sam* xxviii. 7. And in divers other Places, which is tranſlated, *a Familiar Spirit*, it is worthy of Remark, that the *Hebrew* Word in that Text, touching the *Witch of Endor*, carries it, that *ſhe was Miſtreſs of a Pythonick*

thonick Spirit; [*Chald.* She knew how to raiſe the Python; *Syr.* She could compel the Pythons to ariſe; *Vulg. Lat.* She had a Python; *Gr.* terms Her, a Woman ſpeaking as out of the Belly;] now from all theſe Interpretations, there is no Definition of the *evil* Spirit, by the diſtinguiſhing Mark of a familiar One, other, than by the ſeveral Inſtances above mentioned, may conſiſt with what is alledged of good Angels. And with what is mention'd by our Saviour of the Holy Spirit, his coming to abide in us, to dwell and walk in, and to ſup with us. Certainly therefore it is a haughty Preſumption, for any one to preſcribe Rules for our Obedience, or Diſobedience, in ſuch Caſes, unto God, beyond thoſe of his own exhibiting; not only by the above ſaid Precepts, but likewiſe, by inſiſting that an Angel ought not to be believ'd, before a Miracle was wrought by him; moreover, if any do conclude, that the Figure of an Human Body, is neceſſary to the Appearance of an Angel, he will do well to recollect, the Paſſages already above quoted, that mention only *a Likeneſs to the Similitude*, of the Sons of Men. For every thing that does Viſionarily appear, is properly as much the Denotation of an Angel preſent, as the human Form; and of this there are ſeveral particular Inſtances *Chap.* v. *Sect.* 22. tho' this being the moſt noble Figure, of all Creatures viſible, and ſuch as, our eternal Redeemer of the Body, the Lord of Angels, honoured with his Reſidence; the aſſuming it by Angels, has ever juſtly been accounted, to demand a more peculiar Regard, and eſpecially becauſe it carries more ſuitableneſs in it, to the Subjects of their Meſſage.

§ 10. But the Obligation upon Men, to reverence God in ſuch Vouchſafements, beſides the Tenour of Scripture throughout is excellently ſet forth to us, in *Acts* v. 19, 20, 29. Where, when the Angel of the Lord, open'd the Priſon Doors, and brought out ſeveral of the Apoſtles, he commanded them, ſaying, *Go, ſtand and ſpeak in the Temple*; they accordingly obeying, were had before the Council for it, where *Peter* and the reſt, pleading in their Defence, ſaid, *we ought* (πειθαρχειν) *to obey God, rather than Men.* The *Greek* Word there uſed, ſignifies the Obedience of a Subject to a Prince or King, which is certainly as much due among Men, when his Command is ſignified, by a conſtituted Officer, as when given immediately by the Prince himſelf in Perſon. In like manner, if the King Eternal, Immortal, Inviſible, the only Wiſe hath conſtituted and

decla-

declared the Order of his Government over his intellectual Creatures here, to be ſuch; that, whenever his ſovereign Will is made known unto Men, by an Angel, his proper Miniſter and Officer, it is no leſs an Act of Rebellion, in the former, than in the latter Caſe to diſobey. So that, whenever the profeſſing Beleiver does take Part with the Infidel, by cheriſhing in himſelf, and teaching others, Principles of Diſobedience to the Orders of an Angel (bearing upon Him the Enſigns of his Deſcent) ſuch an One acts in open Oppoſition to his Sovereign; and in vain therefore does he in Words pretend, to aſcribe all Honour and Power due to the bleſſed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, dwelling in the Light which no Man can approach unto, whom no Man hath ſeen, nor can ſee. We are not pleading for a Reverence due to Angels, in their Natural Capacity; nor would we be underſtood by any thing already ſaid or which ſhall be, as if we thought, that by their own proper Motion, and any arbitrary Power of their own, they were able either to do us Good or Harm, but in Subſerviency to the Commiſſion of Their King, and Ours. Nevertheleſs, with this Explanation of the true Intent and Meaning of the preſent Argument, it is certain, from the poſitive Laws of Our God, and ſovereign King revealed; that an Angel has frequently, and may yet as often repreſent the Perſon of the Inviſible; and when he does ſo, is to be abſolutely obeyed, in all Things, that He communicates, from the unapproachable Throne above; which will be yet more evident, from what followeth.

§ 11. Notwithſtanding the eaſie and free Addreſs of the Angel to *Hagar*, Gen. xvi. 13. *She called the Name of Jehovah, that ſpake unto her, thou God ſeeſt me*; which the *Chaldee* renders, *She called on the Name of the Lord, that ſpake to her, ſaying, thou art God ſeeing all Things.* And here, once for all, it is not unworthy of Notice, that the *Hebrew* uſing divers Words, whereby to expreſs GOD, *Jehovah* is the moſt Exalted, Majeſtick and Glorious of them all; and this uſually among the Learned is ſtiled the Four Letter'd Name; the Original writing it ſo; and from its Derivation, ſignifies, *He was, He is, He will be the Almighty*, Rev. i. 8. So rever'd was, and is this Name, by the *Jews*, that they ever did, and do think it unlawful to ſpeak it, or to write it in Tranſlations; whence it comes that the *Greek*, and other (inſtead

ſtead thereof) uſe the Word LORD, as the modern Languages do ſtill from thoſe, write it among Chriſtians alſo, to this Day. But this moſt majeſtick Name, we find here in the Caſe of *Hagar* apply'd to an Angel; and on this, as well as ſome other Occaſions, becauſe the Majeſty of God is more peculiarly expreſſed by that Word *Jehovah*. I ſhall for the ſetting forth the greater Emphaſis, of the inſpired Text, take leave ſometimes to uſe it. And, now to purſue the Thread of the hiſtorical Account of Angels, *Lot* ſaid unto one of thoſe that attended him, *Gen.* xix. 19. *Thy Servant hath found Grace in thy Sight, and thou haſt magnified thy Mercy unto me*, which is a plain Inſtance of the aſcribing of Divine Honour, as well as that of *Hagar*.

§ 12. Nay not only have Poor Mortals aſcribed ſuch Honour to God manifeſting Himſelf, in the Appearance of an Angel, but thoſe ſublime Natures, have often taken the Character of that ſupreme Majeſty. Thus when the *Angel of Jehovah*, called to *Abraham* out of Heaven, *Gen.* xxii. 11, 12. *He ſaid, now I know that thou feareſt God; ſeeing thou haſt not witheld thy Son, thy only Son from me.* Thus alſo when *the Angel of God* ſpake unto *Jacob* in a Dream, *Gen.* xxxi. 13. He ſaid *I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedſt the Pillar, and vowedſt a Vow unto me.* Which Paſſage the *Greek* renders, *I am God*, who appeared to thee in *Bethel*, where thou anointedſt to me the Pillar. Thus again, *the Man* that wreſtled with *Jacob*, and pretended he could not ſtay longer than Day-Break, ſaid to him at parting, *Gen.* xxxii. 28, 29. *Thou haſt prevailed with God, and He bleſſed Jacob there.* The like Obſervation fully appears, where *the Angel of Jehovah, appear'd unto Moſes, in a Flame of Fire, out of the midſt of a Buſh*; for there, *when Jehovah ſaw, that he turned aſide, he ſaid*, Exod. iii. 6. *I am the God of thy Father*, &c. And in the following Chapter, where the *Hebrew* is, *Jehovah met Moſes, and ſought to kill him*, the *Greek* and *Chald.* have it, *The Angel of the Lord.* After a like ſort, when *the Angel of God* which went before the Camp of *Iſrael*, removed and went behind them, and the Pillar of the Cloud went from before their Face, and ſtood behind them, it is added, *Exod.* xiv. 24. *Jehovah looked through the Pillar of the Cloud.* The very learned *H. Aynſworth* remarks on this Text, that the *Hebrew* Doctors ſay, *This being an Angel was the Shechinah, or the Preſence of God*; and thereby we underſtand that the *Shechinah* bears the like Meaning as the

Word *Jehovah*, in other forementionʼd Paſſages, when referrʼd to an Angel. This Manifeſtation of the PRESENCE of God [which in *Exod.* xxxiii. 14. is termed by the *Chald. Shechinah* or Majeſty, by the *Hebr.* and *Vulg. Lat. my Face*; by the *Greek, I my ſelf*; by the *Arab. my Light*] is aſcribed to an Angel, in *Iſa.* lxiii. 9. *The Angel of his Preſence ſaved them.* Wherefore this majeſtick Sign of the Preſence of God, is applicable to ſome of the Texts about Angels, above-cited; as to *Jehovah*ʼs looking throʼ the Pillar of Cloud, or to the Angel that ſpake unto *Moſes* in the Buſh, or at leaſt to that Angel, *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 23: where it is by the *Hebrew*, *Beware of his Preſence, and obey his Voice, neither rebell againſt Him, for He will not pardon your Tranſgreſſions, for my Name is in him.* When, and when not, the Brightneſs of the Glory of God (ſuch as theſe Texts aſſert) was ſeen upon an Angel, who can preſume to determine? But whereas, upon their Appearance, we have ſeveral Inſtances, wherein the Beholders are recorded to have been in much Fear for themſelves, on that Occaſion; as *Gideon* in particular, cryed out, *Judg.* vi. 22. *Alas, O Lord God, becauſe I have ſeen an Angel of the Lord Face to Face.* The Commentators on that Text tell us, "Such like Fear aroſe from a common "Perſwaſion, that whoever ſaw an Angel was ſpeedily to "die, and that Perſwaſion (ſay they) ſeems to have riſen, "from that in *Exod.* xxxiii. 20. *Thou canſt not ſee my "Face; for there ſhall no Man ſee me and live.*" And indeed the *Hebrew* Text in *Pſal.* viii. 5. xcvii. 7. And elſewhere, does apply unto Angels the Word *Elohim*, commonly uſed to expreſs GOD.

§ 13. In the Relation of that very Angelʼs appearing to *Gideon*, we have it, that *Jehovah looked upon him and ſaid, have not I ſent thee?* And thus again in *Judg.* ii. 1, 4. the Angel of the Lord who came up from *Gilgal* to *Bochim*, ſaid, *I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the Land which I ſware unto your Fathers*; thereby evidently repreſenting the Perſon of the Omnipotent. Wherefore alſo, when the Lord ſpake to *Paul* in the Night, by a Viſion, *Acts* xviii. 9. the Learned allow both there, and in *Chap.* xxii. 17 18. that the Appearance may well be aſcribed to an Angel, repreſenting the Perſon of Chriſt. And upon the ſame Ground, ſome other Paſſages in the New Teſtament, are equally capable of being ſo applied, ſeeing Chriſt Himſelf is termed by the *Greek, the Angel of great Coun-*

Council, Iſaiah ix. 6. and *the Angel of the Covenant*, Mal. iii. 1. and in ſeveral of thoſe Appearances of an Angel above mention'd, the Angel is generally by Divines conceiv'd, to have perſonated the Son of God, who was afterwards to be incarnate. Finally, that there is Difference of Degrees among Angels, does appear from many Places in Scripture; as in particular *thoſe* that ſpecifie *Michael*, and thoſe that mention Elect Angels, and what is ſaid touching the ſeven Spirits, that peculiarly *ſtand before his Throne, being the ſeven Spirits of God, ſent forth into all the Earth*; and by theſe Definitions, they appear to be diſtinguiſhed, among the Angels, which are all miniſtring Spirits, ſent forth, *Rev.* viii. 1, 5, 6. *Heb.* i. 14.

§ 14. The Reverence due to God, in his Revelation by the Miniſtry of Angels, ſtanding upon ſo large a footing in the Scriptures, eſpecially ſeeing they aſſume the Stile of the Deity, are called *Elohim*, and ſometimes repreſent Chriſt, I cannot conceive to be all vacated and over-turned, by the Words of St. *Paul*, ii. *Cor.* 11, 14. *Satan himſelf is tranformed into an Angel of Light*; any more than the Exiſtence of falſe Apoſtles, was an Argument valid againſt receiving the true Ones, or the like Exiſtence of falſe Prophets among the *Jews*, did warrant them to reject the true. But upon the ſame Ground, that we are warned and admoniſhed, to eſteem as accurſed, every Angel, who, (however ſeemingly from Heaven) ſhould preach any other Goſpel or Meſſage, than parallel to that we have receiv'd, and do acknowledge for Divine; it is left upon the Foot, of Divine Teſtimonies in ſacred Writ, to paſs a Sentence upon all Angelick Appearances: But if this Text of St. *Paul*, be urged further and made to ſerve, without Diſtinction, an overthrowing of all Faith, built upon Revelation by Angels; I cannot ſee, but this is an effectual Way, to ſuppreſs and blow up the Foundations of Faith likewiſe, in every one of the Manners, wherein God by Dream, by Voice and by Prophetick Inſpiration, has, or may ſpeak unto Men. For, if the Devil did at any time, counterfeit and take upon him the Form of an Angel of Light, he did alſo in like Manner, ape the Deity, not only among the Prieſts of *Baal* and other Idols, but even in the falſe Prophets among the *Jews*, who, as we find, acted the true Ones in their outward Manner, by Signs and otherwiſe, and even in the Words, *thus ſaith the Lord*. But, tho' the De-

vil did actualy transform himſelf then, in ſome Senſe, as an Angel of Light, and thereby gain'd his Ends upon the *Jewiſh* Prieſthood, generally to reject the true Prophet, and adhere to the Number of falſe Ones; yet he could never, by his ſo deluding one Age, perſwade and prevail with the next, to caſt of all Reverence due to God revealing; or utterly to reject all the Ways of the true Spirit, becauſe of ſome Reſemblance thereto, in the Devils Agency on the falſe Prophet.

§ 15. Wherefore ſeeing that in the antient Church of God, Satan never prevailed further, on this Head, than for a few Ages before Chriſt, to ſeduce a certain Sect among them, called the Saducees, to inſiſt on ſuch Principles, as did entirely ſapp the Foundations, and deſtroy the Grounds of Evidence, in all Divine Revelations: We hope therefore better Things, from the Chriſtian Church, than ſo to pervert the Text of St. *Paul*, touching Satan's transforming himſelf into the Appearance of an Angel of Light, as to introduce thereby, and eſtabliſh, the Doctrine of Sadduciſm, that there could be no Angel or Spirit revealing. Further than this, we are not pleading: But as the true Prophet did conſtantly appeal, to the Law and Teſtimony Divine, to denominate and diſtinguiſh, an evil Spirit from the true One; ſo we ſubmit every Appearance of Angels, to undergo the ſame Tryal, and ſtricteſt Scrutiny, by the written Word touching them; and that they may do ſo, we have here made the whole foregoing Collection of Preſidents, and noted many Circumſtances attending them, whereby the Thing may be more diſtinctly and accurately examin'd. Therefore taking it for granted, that the Agency of Angels in Divine Revelation, as above treated, does prove abundantly the Reverence and Obedience due to God, with reſpect to their Viſionary Appearance; We proceed now to enquire alſo, into the Scripture Diſcoveries, touching Divine Revelation by Dream.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Concerning Divine Dreams in Scripture.

§ 1. IN what has been remarked, touching the Viſibility of Angels, or rather the appearing human Forms they aſſumed, and wherewith they clothed themſelves upon the Occaſion, their Eſſence or proper Beings remaining ſtill undiſcloſed and impenetrable to the Eye of the Beholder; even as the Soul in Man, is veiled by the Body, from the Eye of Senſe. It muſt be granted however, that in their Apparition, there was ſomething of more explicit Evidence in reſpect to the Beholder, when awake, than can be expected we ſhould find in that Way of Revelation we are now entring into a Diſquiſition of. Nevertheleſs, there is alſo much Agreement under theſe various Manifeſtations; for in the Account of the Angels appearing to Men awake, the Perſon to whom thoſe Meſſengers were ſent, was often affected in that Conjuncture, with Fear and Aſtoniſhment, with Trembling and Faintneſs, and other different Effects on the Body. Anſwerable to which, we find ſomething of parallel Kind under this Head alſo; for ſo *Pilate*'s Wife ſent Word to her Husband (ſitting on the Seat of Juſtice) *Mat.* xxvii. 19. that ſhe *had ſuffered many Things* (by Terrors repreſented, or the like,) *that Day in a Dream*, becauſe of Chriſt (then to be judged) whoſe Innocence was then revealed to her. In like manner *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* iv. 4, 5. being at Reſt, and in a flouriſhing State of Proſperity, *ſaw a Dream*, which made him afraid, and the Viſions of his Head troubled him; thus alſo when *Daniel* himſelf *ſaw a Dream*, and ſaw in the Night-Viſions many glorious Things, *Chap.* vii. 13, 15, 28. *I was grieved* (ſays he) *in my Spirit, in the midſt of my Body, and the Viſions of my Head troubled me; and my Countenance was changed.*

§ 2. In the little that is above-recited, of Divine Dreams; we may obſerve, that the Spirit of God ſeems to place an Emphaſis upon the very Mention of them, (*SAW a DREAM*) that intimates a Sort of Certainty, parallel to that of Ocular Demonſtration; and becauſe it would too much embarraſs every Text (wherein the like

occurs) to take expreſs Notice of it; therefore we do here, in general remark, That the *Hebrew*, and the other Oriental Languages, [*Greek*, *Chaldee*, *Samaritan*, *Arabick*, *Syriac*,] which are the moſt ancient Records of Holy Writ, are more frequent in ſpecifying the Expreſſion in the Text (*SAW a Dream*) than the *Engliſh*; and if the Words carry in them, ſo placed, any more Weight, than *had a Dream*, or *ſaw in a Dream*, the Obſervation cannot be thought impertinent. But to make one Reflection more, upon what is already quoted on this Head; we find that the being troubled in a Dream, (nay, terrified to a great Degree, *Job* iv. 14, 15.) is no Argument againſt its being a Divine One, as the forward Reaſoner on Things he underſtandeth not, may be ready to aſſert.

§ 3. In the general Declaration on the Part of infinite Majeſty, *Joel* ii. 28. of ſhedding forth, or pouring out his Spirit, thoſe that *dream Dreams* are made equally Partakers of the Holy Spirit, with thoſe that propheſy; therefore, without any Diminution to that kind of Divine Communication by Dream, St. *Peter* interprets the glorious Manifeſtation at *Pentecoſt*, to be the Beginning to accompliſh the Prophecy of *Joel*. And in Effect, as we find that the Spirit was daily further poured out upon Believers after *Pentecoſt*, in Viſions, Voice, and Propheſying, had it not been ſo likewiſe iu Dreams, the Accompliſhment muſt have wanted one Chain of the Predictory Promiſe recited by him. This is hinted, leſt the Paucity of Inſtances on the Head of Divine Dreams, occurring in the ſhort Hiſtory of the *Acts*, might with inconſiderate Perſons, breed ſome Prejudice to the Contempt of that Way of the Holy Spirit's Operation. But to proceed; that the uſual Way of Heaven's Condeſcenſion unto Men, in committing his Oracles to the Prophet (to be thro' him utter'd to the World) was by Dream, as well as any other Manner; this appears from that Place, *Numb.* xii. 6, 8. where *Jehovah came down in the Pillar of the Cloud, and ſtood in the Door of the Tabernacle, and ſaid, hear now my Words; if there be a Prophet among you,* [*Chald.* If there ſhall be Prophets among you,] *I the Lord will ſpeak unto him in a Dream*, either by Words diſtinctly heard, or figurative Repreſentations ſeen; of both which Kinds we have many Inſtances in Scripture.

§ 4.

§ 4. Touching the Voice of God in Dream heard, it is written, *Gen.* xx. 3. *God came* [*Arab.* An Angel of the Lord came; *Chald.* a Word came from the Face of God] *to Abimelech in a Dream by Night*: So likewiſe *Gen.* xv. 1, 5. *The Word of the Lord came unto Abraham, in a Viſion*; [*Chald.* in Prophecy; *Greek* admits a Viſion of the Night] which latter Conſtruſtion, the Facts of bringing him forth abroad, and bidding him behold the Stars of Heaven, ſeem to warrant, and to permit us to place here; a Viſion indeed may be to one awake, as well by Night, or in the Dark, as in the Day, which may be collected from ſome Inſtances under the Head of Viſions proper, and is moſt remarkable in that of the Man wreſtling with *Jacob*, *Gen.* xxxii. 26. where the Angel pleads, *Let me go*; *for the Day breaketh*. Nevertheleſs Viſions of the Night are commonly underſtood to mean Dreams, and therefore I may comply with that Conception, without any Injury (I hope) to the holy Text. There is another Difficulty that occurs alſo in the Caſe of *Abraham*, a few Verſes following; where, at the going down of the Sun, a deep Sleep and Horror of great Darkneſs fell upon him, wherein God ſpake to him; for a Revelation by Dream, is properly during a Natural Sleep, tho' the cloſing up ſo of the Senſes may even then be locked faſter, and more ſtrongly preſſed on the Body, by the ſuperveening Power then in the uſual Courſe of Nature: Now, altho' we ſuppoſe that the Sleep of *Abraham* was natural, yet the Horror of great Darkneſs impreſſed afterwards, does not hinder us from underſtanding that celebrated Paſſage, to have a proper Place among the Divine Communications by Dream. But to ſhew the near Reſemblance between an Extacy or Trance, and a deep Sleep, this very Text with thoſe of *Gen.* ii. 21. and 1 *Sam.* xxvi. 12. does ſuffice; for in all of them what we render *deep Sleep*, is in the *Greek* and other Languages, *Extacy*.

§ 5. But that there is not leſs Certainty in the Night-Viſions, than thoſe of the Day, or of Angelick Appearances, or any other Way of God revealing Himſelf; and that the Writings which give us the moſt certain Account of them all, convey to us ſo many noble Things touching that of Dream, as will leave all Believers inexcuſable, that are partial in reflecting upon its Validity, the following Lines will clearly evince. But ſurely in this as

well as other Points, the *Scripture is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*; even the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith: Wherefore, when all Scripture is given by Inſpiration Divine, that the Man of God may be perfected in his Information thereby, we ceaſe from liſtning to thoſe that ſcoff at the Scripture on this Head, by aſſerting, That this Way of Revelation is unworthy of God, to communicate Himſelf by. And now to proceed in turning towards the Patterns of the ancient Faith; that Patriarch whom God Himſelf honoured with the glorious Name of *Iſrael*, was ſo far from being captiouſly offended with his Dream of the Ram's leaping upon the Cattle, that he mentions it, with the nobleſt Expreſſions of Honour to God for it, ſaying, *Gen.* xxxi. 5, 11, 13. *The God of my Father hath been with me, and the Angel of God ſpake to me in a Dream, and ſaid, I am the God of Bethel*; and the Care of our heavenly Father over the ſame Patriarch, appears again in *ver.* 24. by a Dream, wherein the *Chaldee* has it, *the Word came from the Face of God to Laban*, Lat. Vulg. *Laban ſaw God ſpeaking to him in Dreams*, the *Arab.* aſcribes the ſame to an Angel; tho' the Inſtrumentality of an Angel makes it not leſs Divine, as is remarkable in the preceding Acknowledgment of *Jacob*; the ſame noble Wreſtler with Omnipotence, having offer'd up Sacrifices of Faith at *Beerſheba*, *Gen.* xlvi. 2. obtains again an Anſwer from his high Oracle, which the *Vulg. Lat.* renders, *Iſrael heard God calling to him by a Viſion of the Night, ſaying, Jacob, Jacob, I am God, the God of thy Fathers.* The Criticks nevertheleſs allow the Voice of an Angel in this alſo; wherefore, there is no Need of doubting, but Revelation by Dream may be aſcribed to the Miniſtry of Angels, without Impeachment of the ſupreme Authority thereof. But in the Oracular Reſponſe by Dream, if the coming of it upon Prayer, be an Argument of its Divinity, then have we another glorious Inſtance, enough to put to Shame (if poſſible) the ſurly Pride of the ſcornful in this Caſe; for when King *Solomon* had with devout Mind, offer'd a thouſand Burnt Sacrifices, 2 *Chron.* i. 7. in that very Night, did the Lord appear to him in a Dream, at *Gibeon*, 1 *Kings* iii. 5, 15. and ſaid, *Ask what I ſhall give thee?* And hereat let us pauſe a while, and reflect on it, that for Him who dwelleth in Light unapproachable, to make ſuch an Offer to Man any Way, is indeed worthy of the utmoſt Admiration; and why not worthy of ſome Notice, that this contemptible Manner

of

of revealing Himself, should be thereby stampt with an Honour, never parallel'd (as I remember) in any other.

§ 6. The actual conferring of the glorious Gift of Wisdom upon *Solomon*, during that Vision of the Night, is without a Parallel also, by any single Visionary Appearance; what we lose however by the ordinary Contempt of Him, who giveth not Account of his Proceedings, may be learnt, if we please, from the Assertion in *Job*, Chap. xxxiii. 13, 17. *That God speaketh once, yea twice (yet Man perceiveth it not) in a Dream, in a Vision of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth upon Men, in Slumbrings upon the Bed; then he openeth the Ears of Men, and sealeth their Instruction, that he may withdraw Man from his Purpose, and his Pride from Man.* But alas! how few who pretend to believe all this, are willing to have their Pride withdrawn? Whereas, if it be a Favour from Heaven, to mortify our Pride thus; *those* only, *that are of Faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham*, Gal. iii. 9. and to others the Word of God is made of none Effect, which saith, 1 *Cor.* iii. 18. *Let no Man deceive himself: If any Man among you seemeth to be wise in this World, let him become a Fool that he may be wise.* All which being apply'd to the present Subject, leaves our Duty to the Father of Spirits, therein clear.

§ 7. The great Prophet of his Church, who is Lord over his own Houshold, tells us, *Mark* viii. 38. *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my Words, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.* Whilst therefore we are speaking of the Faith of all his sacred Prophets, to whom the Word came in Dream, as well as other Manifestations, there's no Cause of Shame in adding that in *Job*, Chap. iv. 12--17. *A Word was secretly said to me, and mine Ear receiv'd a little thereof; in Thoughts from the Visions of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth on Men, Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my Bones to shake; then a Spirit passed before my Face, which made the Hair of my Flesh stand up; it stood still, but I did not discern the Form thereof* (distinctly) *an Image was before mine Eyes, and I heard a still Voice, saying, Shall Mortal Man be more just than God?* It will easily be granted, that we have no Reason to imagine our selves wiser than God, any more than juster: And if I know the Subordination of my constituted Nature, I am to receive Instruction from my Crea-

tor,

tor, and not find fault with Him, by quibbling upon the manner, wherein the Angel appears, by whom, He ſeeks to ſeal it to me. Wherefore, neither is the here recited Terror, nor the Indiſtinction of the Form, no, nor the defect of hearing all, which that ſmall Voice ſaid, a ſufficient ground, to reject a Meſſenger, who to the Hearer and Beholder, is atteſted otherwiſe, to be Divine.

§ 8. One of the moſt expreſs Prophecies in the Book of *Jeremiah* touching the Bleſſed Days of the *Meſſiah* (which ends thus: *I have ſatiated the weary Soul, and I have repleniſhed every ſorrowful Soul*) was given him by Dream; and as the Import of the Viſion was full of Conſolation, ſo was his Sleep (figurative of it) ſweet unto him, *Jer.* xxxi. 25, 26. Moreover, whoever has Faith in the Days of full Conſolations, declared to the Church by the *Song of Songs* (the Title whereof by the *Chald.* is, *Songs and Hymns, which* Solomon *the Prophet, the King of* Iſrael, *utter'd by the Spirit of Prophecy, before the Lord, the Lord of all the World*) let him not be offended with *the Wine for his Beloved, that goeth down ſweetly, cauſing the Lips of thoſe that are aſleep to ſpeak*, Cant. vii. 9. for if He that is greater than *Solomon*, is to drink it new with his Diſciples, I know not what can be meant better by it, than to be filled with the Spirit, who giveth Songs in the Night, and can make the Lips of thoſe that are aſleep to ſpeak them.

§ 9. How the Favour of God ſhone brightly thro' Dreams, to uſher forth his only begotten Son to the World, the two firſt Chapters of *Mat.* inform us; for, to prevent *Herod*'s malicious Intentions, the Wiſe Men are thereby warn'd, not to return to him at *Jeruſalem*. *Joſeph*, at the firſt, having Thoughts to put away his Wife, *the Angel of the Lord* (intruſted to anſwer to the ſecret of his Thoughts, and thereby giving Proof of his Heavenly Authority) *appeared to him in a Dream*, and ſcatter'd thoſe Clouds: Again, When *Emanuel* was born, the Angel of the Lord appear'd the like way unto him, ſaying, *Go thou with the young Child and his Mother into* Ægypt, *and remain there until I bring thee word*: Accordly, *Herod* being dead, the Angel of the Lord appears to *Joſeph* in *Ægypt* the third time, commanding his return into the Land of *Iſrael*. *Laſtly*, Being returned, and again under a concern in his Thoughts, he was the fourth time *warned* (Χρηματισθεις benefited or anſwer'd) *of God in a Dream*, and ſo turn'd aſide into *Galilee*. We have already

dy mention'd the Dream of *Pilate*'s Wife, the Neglect of which Admonition, was fatal to himſelf, as Hiſtorians relate. As to the two Viſions in the Night vouchſafed to St. *Paul* (*Acts* xvi. 9. xviii. 9.) they ought to be conſtru'd rather of Dreams, according to the uſual Tenour of Scripture Phraſe; but ſince they might be otherwiſe, I proceed from this ſort of Dream, conſiderable chiefly, or only for Words therein, diſtinctly heard, to enquire into that, wherein figurative Repreſentations were principally, if not only, remarkable.

§ 10. *Jacob dreamed,* Gen. xxviii. 12. *and behold, a Ladder ſet upon the Earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven; and behold; the Angels of God, aſcending and deſcending on it; and behold! Jehovah* [*Chald.* The Glory of the Lord, which the Criticks interpret an Archangel;] *ſtood above it.* Which Manifeſtation was, it ſeem'd, ſo remarkable a Divine Evidence, that the *Iſraelite* indeed, who had acknowledg'd the Son of God on a leſſer one, was promiſed (with others) a Demonſtration equal to that of this Dream; to wit, *John* i. 51. That *they ſhould ſee Heaven open, and the Angels of God aſcending and deſcending upon the Son of Man.* Wherefore, I beſeech the Chriſtian, for the Love of the Spirit, pour'd out in Dreams, and in reſpect to his Saviour's Words here, not to be ſo haſty in diſdaining of them; for if there be no ſufficient Evidence in the Viſion of Angels aſcending and deſcending, wherein lies the force of our Lord's Promiſe, that they ſhould have Evidence of Him, either the ſame in kind, or equal to it? It behoves them alſo to conſider better of the double Dream to *Joſeph, Gen.* xxxvii. 5---11. The one of the Sheaves of Corn, the other of the Sun, Moon and Stars; for if Men allow themſelves to be Libertines in Reaſoning on Matters Supernatural, what could be more inſolent and provoking among Brothers, than for a younger One, to tell his Elders ſuch like Dreams? Wherefore, when it is ſaid, That *they hated him yet the more for his Dreams,* let Chriſtians beware, they don't copy after ſo impious a Pattern; nay, and out-do it, by hating their Brother ſecretly, and even ſeparating him from their Society, merely for the owning Divine Viſions, where no ſuch ſtinging Provocation is given, as in this Caſe of *Joſeph* to his Brethren.

§ 11. But if even Believers, or the Members otherwiſe of the Houſhold of Faith, will on this Account, turn Perſecutors,

for

for the ſake only of a Reverence due to God, they who are thus treated have for Comfort, the ſame Hiſtory of *Joſeph*, wherein tho' he was ſold a Slave for it, and in the event laid in Irons, he endur'd Harm but for a little while, before the Faithful and True God to his Servants, did by the ſame Vouchſafement to him, concerning Night Viſions (for which he had ſuffer'd) deliver him, and promote him to be the Protector of his Kindred. Thus the Dreams ſeen by the Butler and Baker, *Gen.* xl. 8,-19. occaſion'd his Deliverance, and thoſe by the King, in the next Chapter, wrought his Exaltation. In the Relation of thoſe ſeveral Divine Dreams, the Text notes, that the *Mind* of the Recipient, was *troubled*, in that of *Pharaoh* particularly, the *Syr.* expreſſes it, *was toſſed up and down*, Vulg. Lat. *terribly affrightned*, the Hebr. *beaten as with a Hammer*; ſo that the Word of the the Lord in Dream, carries a Force with it, and Impreſſion, which the weakneſs of the Natural cannot approach, whether in Terror or Swavity; of the latter, *Jeremiah*'s is an Inſtance; of the former, theſe, with many more. But as by Dreams, the High and Mighty Lord of Heaven and Earth, provided well for *Joſeph*, and in him for his Church; ſo let the empty Gigler at them, either caſt off the Mask of owning the Authority of Scripture, or learn to know from it, that the ſame ſtrong and mighty Arm, can bruiſe any other as He did *Job*; and the Anguiſh in him was too pungent, the Bitterneſs of his Soul too ſharp, to be conceal'd, *Job* vii. 11. 15. *For when I think* (ſays he) *my Bed ſhall comfort me, and eaſe my Sorrows, then thou ſcareſt me with Dreams, and terrifieſt me through Viſions, ſo that my Soul chooſes Strangling and Death, rather than my Life.*

§ 12. Seeing there are ſeveral Viſions in *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and the *Revelations* of St. *John*, which are not to this Day underſtood, and do need ſtill an Interpretation from Him that gave them, God having thereby left a Leſſon, proper at once to withdraw Pride from Man, and at the ſame time an Item, to ask that *Wiſdom* of Him, who alone can give it: But as in Ænigmatical Viſions, even thoſe abovemention'd, the Prophet himſelf (as far as we can judge) did not underſtand the meaning of them; ſurely, it is not for us to ſay dogmatically, a Dream cannot be from the Lord, becauſe the Signification is not inſtantly given with it, to the Receiver. Thus when *Joſeph* mention'd his to the Family, tho' the Senſe of them was ſuſpected; yet it does not appear, that he himſelf knew at that Time poſitively

tively the Import of them; wherefore, when the Butler and Baker related theirs, he ſays, *do not Interpretations belong to God?* Which allows, that a Dream may be from God, and yet the Interpretation reſerv'd by Him. In like manner, when the King had recited the Revelations receiv'd on his Part, *Joſeph* replies, *Gen.* lxi. 16. *It is not in me*; or as the *Chald. Not out of my Wiſdom, but from before the Lord, anſwer'd ſhall be the Peace of Pharoah.* To the ſame Purport, is that Monarch's Confeſſion in *Verſe* 38. Can we find a Man as this, *in whom the Spirit of God is?* or as the *Chald. In whom the Spirit of Prophecy from before God is?*

§ 13. Another Obſervation ought to be made, before we paſs over this Hiſtory of *Joſeph*; that is, that the Author of Divine Dreams ſometimes gives them double, for the greater Aſſurance of Faith on them; therefore is it ſaid, touching thoſe two of *Pharoah, the Dream is one*, tho' they were, not only in their Repreſentation diſtinctly two, but different in the Figures repreſented under them, as were likewiſe thoſe two of *Joſeph* himſelf: And to back this Remark, the moſt antient Tranſlations of the *Hebrew* Text, often render the Word DREAM in the plural, DREAMS. But now to conſider other Inſtances; *Gideon* being commanded to go down to the Army of the *Midianites*, was told, *Judg.* vii. 10--15. he ſhould there hear what they ſaid, and ſo his Hands ſhould be ſtrengthned to attack them; accordingly he heard one Soldier telling to another, his Dream of a Barley-Cake, which that other (by Divine Inſtruction) interpreted to mean the Sword of *Gideon*, whereupon the commiſſioned Captain and Prophet worſhipped, with Faith of Victory: Neither the Teller, nor the Hearer of this Dream, underſtood it of themſelves; nor are others, who receive ſuch like ones, warranted to expect the full Knowledge of their Senſe, in the Inſtant; for *God who gives Knowledge and Skill in all Learning and Wiſdom*; He it was, that *gave to Daniel Underſtanding in all Divine Viſions and Dreams*, Dan. i. 17. *viz.* the Gift of Interpretation, by the Spirit of Prophecy. Wherefore, according to that in *Job* xxxiii, 13, 17. when God ſpeaketh to Men thus, in the Viſions of the Night, they are to lower their Self-Conceit, and by the Conviction of their Lack of Wiſdom, to ſeek it from Him, who giveth freely, and upbraideth not, for their neceſſary Ignorance.

§ 14.

§ 14. In the Decree publiſh'd by *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* iv. 1--4. ſtiles the Dreams and Viſions of his Head, SIGNS and WONDERS, or MIRACLES, which God had wrought towards him, and with Exclamation redoubles it, as if unexpreſſible; how great are his SIGNS! how mighty his WONDERS! So that the Prophet, in theſe Caſes, ſtands in Need of no outward Prodigy, to eſtabliſh his Faith of the Celeſtial Operation in them; for the very Act of God when revealing, is altogether miraculous upon Himſelf; if ſuch a Man therefore be thought worthy, to ſuffer Shame for his Sake, who gave the Occaſion; let him rejoice and glorify God, with the Temper of *Daniel*, *Chap.* ii. 28, 30. ſaying, *There is a God in Heaven that revealeth Secrets; but as for me, this Secret is not revealed to me, for any Wiſdom that I have, more than any living.* To conclude, we might now examine the ſeveral Dreams of *Daniel*, and therein the Sublimity of Matters contained, would afford further Subject of diſplaying the Triumph of God's Wiſdom, over that of Man; in chooſing to convey the ſame (with all the other wonderful Things herein mention'd) by that deſpiſed Way of Dream, as well as, by the meer Act of his Soveraignty, to make Crown'd Heads his Inſtruments, in this kind more numerous, than in any other manner of his ſpeaking unto Men.

§ 15. But now to recollect or review the whole; as in the Apparition of Angels, they often ſpake in the Style of Jehovah Himſelf, and he that ſaw them, ſaid, he had ſeen God, and the Word deliver'd by them to Men, was the Word of the Lord expreſly: So in the Caſe of Dreams, *Jacob* ſays, the God of his Father had been with him, and an Angel ſpake to him in a Dream; and in the New Teſtament, an Angel coming to *Joſeph* in a Dream, and God warning him in it, is of the ſame Import; for as 'tis God's Property only to know the Thoughts of Men, the Angel's Diſcovery of *Joſeph*'s, ſhews that he acted ſubordinately in the Dream. Dreams therefore, are not of leſs Authority, or leſs divine, becauſe the Miniſtry of Angels interpoſes therein, as in many Inſtances above-cited, the Text expreſly mentions. And in ſome Places where the Text affirms, that God ſpake in a Dream, the Learned do not doubt to interpret, that it was by an Angel: When we read therefore, that God will make Himſelf known to the Prophet in a Dream, and that his Spirit ſhall be poured out in Dreams; theſe

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Expreſſions, muſt either be reconciled with the Miniſtry of Angels in them, or a Diſtinction put, when the Interpoſition of an Angel is uſed, and when not: But as I find no Ability to unfold that Myſtery, I muſt content my ſelf to believe, that the Word, Influence, and Operation of an Angel herein, manifeſting Himſelf a Heavenly one, is of the ſame Authority to me, as the Word of God Himſelf, or of the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, the Teſtimony of Jeſus.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning Revelation by Voice in Scripture.

§ 1. AS 'tis obvious from the Scripture Stile, that all Manner of Revelation, is ſometimes comprehended under *the Word* VISION; the like might be obſerv'd, poſſibly, as frequently to be, *in that* of VOICE. Particularly, in all thoſe Places very numerous, wherein the People of *Iſrael* are ſummon'd, attentively to hear *his Voice*; for Inſtances in *Deut.* xviii. where Bleſſings are moſt ſolemnly pronounced on the Obedient to it, and ſevere Judgments denounced upon thoſe, who ſhould not obey it. Moreover, Expoſtulations to hearken to the Voice of the Lord, occur often, not only in the Books of *Moſes*, and ſometimes in the Hiſtorical, but throughout all the Prophets. Furthermore as the moſt general Expreſſion of the Prophets Commiſſion, is, that *the Word of the Lord* came to him, we do readily grant, that the ſame may comprehend all the ſeveral Ways of Revelation; but then what is neareſt to the literal Senſe, of thoſe and ſuch like Terms, ought not to be excluded, from being contain'd within the meaning of them; and in Conſequence, there is ſufficient Reaſon from thence to conclude, that the Way of Revelation by Voice, or on Man's Part, by a Perception of the Ear, was much more frequent, than we find the ſame otherwiſe diſtinctly expreſſed.

§ 2. It is not however unworthy of Obſervation, that beſides an articulate Voice heard, there are Sounds mention'd,

tion'd, to be formed in the Ear of Man, which were not articulate, and yet nevertheleſs from Him, who formed the Ear. Among theſe, is to be reckon'd that in 2 *Sam.* v. 24, where we find *the ſound of a going* (whatever it was) on the Tops of the Mulberry Trees, given by the Lord, a Sign to *David*, that when he heard it, then he ſhould attact the Camp of the *Philiſtines*. And thus, when *Eliſha* had pronounced the Word of the Lord, touching an incredible Plenty in *Samaria*, the Day following, 2 *Kings* vii. 6. The ſame Jehovah, made the Army of the Beſiegers, to hear a noiſe of Chariots, and a noiſe of Horſes, even the noiſe of a great Hoſt; whilſt 'tis apparent, the Beſieged in *Samaria*, heard nothing of it; wherefore, we have Ground to conceive, that the Sound aboveſaid, was formed miraculouſly in their Ears, as the former in thoſe of *David*, and not from any Concuſſion in the Air. Thus alſo, we have Reaſon to think, touching that *Sound* which came from Heaven at the Day of *Pentecoſt*, *Acts.* ii, 2. *as* or like to that, *of a mighty ruſhing Wind*, which filled the Houſe, that is, the Sound filled the Ears of all in it; for it does not appear, that any Wind attended, or that the Noiſe of ſuch a Hurricane, was heard abroad; therefore, this alſo ſeems a Sound miraculouſly formed in the Ear, and the Terror of it, no more inconſiſtent with the Spirit of God to perform than that of a ſtill Voice. In like Manner, the Voice of *Alpha and Omega*, is deſcribed to us, to affect St. *John*, like the Sound of many Waters, *Rev.* i. 15. And elſewhere there is Mention of Thunders, Harps, Trumpets and Whirlwinds; but what the Shout, and the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and the Trump of God mean, 1 *Theſ.* iv. 16. it becomes us more, to expect with Fear, than now preſumptiouſly to define.

§ 3. Beſides what has been already hinted of thoſe general Terms in Scripture, that imply tho' not expreſly define, a Revelation by Voice; there is Mention of *living Oracles*, receiv'd, *Acts* vii. 38. Where the Word λογια, render'd Oracles, is by the antient Tranſlations rendred *Words, or Speeches*; ſignifying the Reſponſes of a Deity, to the Prayers of his Worſhipers, whether apply'd to the Oracles of Idols, or to that of the only true God. Therefore, as this Term *Oracle*, alludes properly to a Voice diſtinctly heard, without any Angelick Apparition pronouncing it; the Application thereof to *Moſes* in that Text, of hearing ſuch living Oracles, will abundantly be made out

to belong to this Subject; if Men are inclined heedfully to obſerve the uſual Practice of *Moſes* in approaching the Tabernacle, upon emergent Occaſions, and obtaining ſuch Reſponſes thence. This Way of Revelation however, was not limited to *Moſes*, tho' to him God ſpoke, as one Friend to another, and therein he exceeded all other Prophets. But *Iſaiah* ſays, Chap. l. 5. *The Lord God hath open'd mine Ear*; and *Chap.* liii. *Who hath believ'd our* HEARING? for ſo the *Hebrew* runs, and moſt of the antient Tranſlations carry it. The ſame Word occurs, *Jer.* xlix. 14. *I have heard a* HEARING *from the Lord*; and *Obadiah* in the firſt Verſe heard the like, and the ſame *Hebrew* Word, as in all thoſe other Texts, is rendred by the *Engliſh*, *Habak.* iii. 2, 16. *I have heard thy* SPEECH, *and was afraid*; *and when I heard, my Belly trembled, my Lips quiver'd at the Voice, Rottenneſs enter'd into my Bones, and I trembled in my ſelf*: From which Inſtances it is evident, that this Way of Revelation was very uſual to the Prophets; and from the Effects attending it on *Habakkuk*, and other Inſtances here following, we are bound to believe, that the Divine Utterance was not, always without Terror, notwithſtanding what ſome Men aſſert to the contrary; who proudly love to impoſe their own fooliſh Schemes and Syſtems, upon the Almighty.

§ 4. Our firſt Parents heard *the Voice of the Lord God*, walking in Paradice; and as they had Time after it to hide themſelves, the Sound muſt be at ſome Diſtance; the *Chaldee* renders it, *the Voice of the Speech of the Lord God*; which anſwers to that Deſcription in *Ezek.* i. 24. *I heard the Noiſe of their Wings like the Noiſe of great Waters, as the Voice of the Almighty*; *the Voice of Speech as the Noiſe of an Hoſt.* Some Annotators on the Text, do not ſtick to aſſert, that this Voice, in Paradice, of the Lord God was probably formed by an Angel: Thus alſo, after a Viſion to *Abraham*, the Word [*Greek*, the Voice] of the Lord came to him, *Gen.* xv. 4. and upon his offering up of *Iſaac*, the Angel of *Jehovah* called [*Hebr.* aloud] unto him out of Heaven, (or the Heavens,) *Abraham, Abraham, Chap.* xxii. 11, 15, 16. which being repeated, the Angelick Voice ſaid, *by my ſelf have I ſworn*; wherein the Authority of God ſpeaking, and of the Angel ſpeaking, is indiſtinguiſhable; as alſo where 'tis wrirten, *God heard, and the Angel of God called to Hagar out of Heaven*, Chap. xxi. 17. ſaying, *I will make Iſhmael a great Nation.*

§ 5. But now to enquire into the Manifeſtations vouchſafed to that glorious Perſon, to whom the Inviſible ſpake, *Numb.* xii. 8. *Mouth to Mouth, even apparently, and not in dark Speeches*: Mouth to Mouth, is rendred by the *Chaldee*, *Speech for Speech*; and the whole means familiarly and plainly, by Interlocution, as Friend with Friend, mutually interchanging Diſcourſe, one to another; wherein the Ineffable ſtoop'd to the plain Dialect of Men, without thoſe dark Parabolical Expreſſions, uſed by Him, to other Prophets. And here *H. Ainſworth* on the Pentetеuch tells us, that the *Hebrew* Doctors affirm, *that all the Prophets except* Moſes, *propheſied by the Hands* (or Influence) *of an Angel*; *and thereby it was, that they ſaw, and ſpake in Parables, and dark Speeches.* Surely then, in this Clearneſs of the Deity's Manifeſtation to *Moſes*, he exceeded not only all the Prophets of the Old, but of the New Teſtament alſo, ſeeing that St. *Paul* in his Epiſtles, mentions the ſpeaking in a Myſtery, and that he *ſaw thro' a Glaſs*, in a *Riddle*, and not Face to Face, as *Moſes*. The *dark Speeches* in the Text of *Numbers* abovecited, is in all the ancient Tranſlations of the *Polyglotte*, rendred, *Riddles*, being the ſame Word that the Holy Spirit in St. *Paul* makes uſe of. Wherefore a Difficulty or Darkneſs in the Terms and Expreſſions, is never to be judged inconſiſtent with the Spirit of Prophecy, in a leſs Degree, than that of *Moſes*, notwithſtanding what our Modern Divines alledge to the contrary.

§ 6. And yet, tho' the Manifeſtation of the INVISIBLE, was ſo bright to *Moſes*, as that in Compariſon with other Prophets, it was *apparently*, and theirs in *dark Speeches*; his was *Face to Face*, and theirs *thro' a Glaſs darkly*; the Obſervation however of the *Hebrew* Doctors, that his was without any Medium, or Angelick Interpoſition, in the Manner of Revelation, cannot be allowed; for where it is written, that *Moſes went up unto God*, *Exod.* xix. iii. the *Arab.* ſays, *unto the Angel of God*, and the *Chald. into the Preſence of the Word of the Lord*, and the Holy Spirit confirms it to be the Preſence of an Angel, ſaying, *Acts* vii. 38. *that the Angel ſpake in Mount Sinai to Moſes, who* there *receiv'd the lively Oracles to give unto us*: Wherefore, when 'tis ſaid in the ſame Verſe, that the Lord *called unto him out of the Mountain*, we have full Authority to underſtand it, of a Voice formed by the Angel, which by the Ninth Verſe appears to be ſo loud, that it was heard by the People in the

the Camp; in the Nineteenth Verſe, *Moſes ſpake* (ſaying, *Heb.* xii. 21. *I exceedingly fear and quake,*) *and God anſwer'd him by a* VOICE, or as the *Chald. It was anſwer'd him, from the Preſence of the Lord, by a Voice*; and as the Text adds, that *the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai*, the *Arab.* has it, *the Angel of God appear'd upon Mount Sinai*; all which conſider'd, and compar'd with what we find in the New Teſtament, that the Law was given and ordained by Angels; we have aſſured Foundation of Confidence, that *Moſes* himſelf, notwithſtauding the clear and apparent Manner of Manifeſtation, was not without the Interpoſition of Angels, in the Intercourſe between *Jehovah*, and him therein.

§ 7. But further, touching this bright Manner of the Communion of *Moſes* with God, we read, *Exod.* xxxiii. 9, 11. that when *Moſes* enter'd into *the Tabernacle, the cloudy Pillar* (elſewhere conſtrued the Sign of the Angel going before, and behind the Camp) *deſcended and ſtood at the Door of it*, and the Lord talked with *Moſes*, and ſpake unto him, *Face to Face*, as a Man ſpeaketh unto his Friend: Now, becauſe in the Twentieth Verſe, 'tis ſaid, *no Man can ſee my Face*, we muſt not underſtand, that by ſpeaking Face to Face, was meant any Form of God's Eſſence; therefore, if any Form appear'd, it was by an Angel: But as there is no Need to ſuppoſe any Form at all preſent; the ſpeaking *Face to Face*, means the Manner of the Voice, to be kind and familiar; as the *Chaldee* expreſſes it, *Speech to Speech*; and for this kind and familiar Correſpondence of God with *Moſes*, we have another notable Inſtance, *Numb.* vii. 89. where *Moſes* went into the Tabernacle *to ſpeak with him*, [*Vulg. Lat.* to conſult the Oracle,] *then he heard the Voice of One* [*Greek*, the Lord, *Chald. Jon.* the Spirit,] *ſpeaking unto him, from off the Mercy Seat, between the Cherubims*; ſo that the Voice came out from Heaven, to between the Cherubims, and from thence it came out, into the Tent of the Congregation, as the *Rabbins* (in *Ainſworth*) deſcribe it.

§ 8. Now, to deſcend from that illuſtrious Manner of Manifeſtation to *Moſes*, to the more common and ordinary One, by Voice: After that, the Angel of the Lord to *Gideon, Jud.* vi. 21, 23. departed out of his Sight, or vaniſhed and diſappear'd, *Jehovah ſaid unto him, fear not thou ſhalt not die*; whereupon the Criticks aſſert, that theſe Words, were formed in the Air by the Angel, after he diſappear'd: Thus in the Caſe of *Samuel* alſo, when the Lord

called him by Name, 1 *Sam.* iii. 4. The Voice (it ſeems) went out from the Holy of Holies, and paſſing by the interjacent Space (where *Eli* lay) reached *Samuel*, who lay beyond it; and tho' afterwards, there is ſome Appearance of Viſion, accompanying the Voices to *Samuel*, yet in the 21ſt Verſe 'tis ſaid again, the Lord revealed Himſelf to him in *Shiloh, by Voice or Speech*; [as the *Chald. Jon. Syr. Arab.* have it;] wherefore this excellent Perſon, who has that ſingular Priviledge recorded of him, that he was *known* [*Gr. believ'd*] from one End of *Iſrael* to the other, to be a Prophet, conſtituted of God, enjoyed much of Divine Communications by Voice; for the Day before *Saul* came to him, 1 *Sam.* ix. 15. the Lord had *told Samuel in his Ear*, [the *Hebr.* and *Gr.* uncover'd his Ear,] that is, ſecretly or by a low Voice; as when we whiſper to a Perſon, we uncover his Ear: Thus alſo, when *Samuel* ſaw *Saul*, the Lord ſaid to him [*Chald.* from before the Lord, it was ſaid to him,] *behold the Man, of whom I ſpake to thee.*

§ 9. *Elias* alſo, who in ſome reſpects, is honoured above all the Prophets, and ſtands next to *Moſes*, was well acquainted with his Manner of Revelation to the Ear; for, being in a Cave at *Horeb*, the Mount *of God* [*Chald.* where the *Glory of the Lord* was revealed] Jehovah paſſed by, 1 *Kings.* xi--13. And the Evidences of it were, a ſtrong Wind renting the Mountains, after that an Earthquake, and after that, a Fire; but the Lord [*Chald.* the Glory, *Shechinah* or Majeſty, of the Lord] was not in all theſe; after thoſe, the *ſtill ſmall Voice* [*Gr.* and *Vulg Lat.* the whiſtling of a gentle Air: *Chald.* and *Arab.* a ſmall Voice of ſinging.] brought forth *Elias*, from the Cave to attend; and behold, there came an articulate Voice to him, ſaying, what doſt thou here *Elijah?* Again, when King *Ahaziah* had ſent to *Beelzebub*, [*Gr.* the Flie-God,] the Angel of the Lord, 2 *Kings* i. 3, 15. without any Apparition, and ſo either by Voice heard, or *inward Inſpiration* (which ſome Annotators remark) bid him go meet the King's Meſſengers; in like Manner, when the two Captains of Fifty were conſumed with Fire from Heaven, the Angel of the Lord ſpake to him, to go down with the third.

§ 10. Tho' the Manner of the ſmall Voice to *Elias*, be judged by the Rabbins to have been that, which the ſole Arbiter of his own Ways, thought good to uſe, from between the Cherubims, over the Mercy Seat; yet to le

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Man know, he is not to be measured by that, or any other like outward Rule, we have these further Instances of a different kind; for, if the Lord was not manifested, in the blustring Wind to *Elijah*, yet he was so in the Whirlwind to *Job*, and spake out of it twice, *Chap.* xxxviii. 1. xlvi. 6. And not much otherwise, is that of *Ezekiel*, who when the Spirit took him up, heard behind him, a Voice of a great Rushing, *Ezek.* iii. 12. *Saying, blessed be the Glory of the Lord from his Place:* We may also from the Effect, justly conceive the Voice which fell from Heaven (or the Heavens) not to have been without Terror, that said to *Nebuchadnezzer, Dan.* iv. 31. *Thy Kingdom is departed from thee:* Whether this were, by the Agency of an Angel or not, the Learned do well not to determine, seeing that it makes no difference in the Authority; and the Instrumentality of those Heavenly Powers, is so clearly asserted in this Way of Revelation by Voice, that even that matchless Communication of God to *Moses*, was not without it, as has already appeared.

§ 11. After the Baptism of Jesus, and the Spirit of God was seen to descend upon him; there are some Antient Authorities mention'd by Dr. *Mills*, that add, *And there shined a great Light round about the Place*; the like whereof was at St. *Paul's* Conversion, and bears a Parallel to the *Shechinah*, or most majestick Manifestation of the Divine Presence mention'd in the Old Testament; but however that was, *Behold, a Voice from Heaven, Mat.* iii. 17. *Saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; touching which most sacred Oracle, there are some of no mean Account among the Men of Letters, that understand it, of the Words of God, pronounced thro' the Instrumentality of an Angel: At another Time, whilst our Lord Redeemer was at Prayer, *John* xii. 28, 29. and said, *Father glorify thy Name, then came there a Voice, from Heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again; the People therefore that stood by and heard it, said that it thunder'd, others said,* [*Arab.* adds, *Yes*;] *an Angel spake to him; Jesus answer'd, this Voice came for your Sakes.* The conjoined Sounds of Thunder, and Voices are several Times in the *Apocalypse*, noted in the Angelick Celebrations above; nor do they here, disagree at all: In the Ratlings of Thunder, an articulate Voice was heard; and so his Followers (for the Sake of whom it came) did not differ, since both (for any thing appears) were true; and our Lord reproves them not, for

aſcribing it to an Angel. A third Time was our Lord atteſted to, *by a Voice that came from Heaven*, 2 Pet. i. 17, 18. *from the excellent Glory, when he receiv'd from God the Father, Honour and Glory*; the Hiſtory whereof we have thus: After our Saviour's Transfiguration on the Mount, and his Colloquy there with *Moſes* and *Elias*, *Luke* ix. 33, 35. as theſe departed from him, and while *Peter* ſpake, ſo that he knew not what he ſaid, *there came a Cloud and overſhadowed them, and whilſt they fear'd as they entred into the Cloud, there came a Voice out of the Cloud, ſaying, this is my beloved Son, hear him.* Wherefore, 'tis no little Recommendation to us, of this Method of divine Revelation, that our bleſſed Lord Himſelf, is ſaid to have receiv'd Honour from his Father, on that Occaſion, wherein this alſo had a Share. But ſeeing there are in the Text, three Deſignations of Time, remarked of this Occurrence, that it was, *AS Moſes and Elias departed from him*, and *AS Peter yet ſpake*, and *AS the bright Cloud overſhadowed them*, the Voice came out of it; theſe do not hinder, but that the Tranſaction was very ſhort, wherein the ſame was heard.

§ 12. In the Viſion St. *Peter* had, of the Beaſts and Fowls; ſeparately from it, there came a Voice to him from Heaven, *Acts* xi. 9, 12. three Times; but whether, the Command the Spirit gave him, to go with the Men (then immediately ſtanding at the Door) ought to be aſcribed alſo to this Head, is dubious; however, ſo ſacred was this Way of Revelation held, even by the Oppoſers of the Apoſtles, that the *Phariſees*, touching St. *Paul* could ſay, *Acts* xxiii. 9. *If a Spirit or an Angel hath ſpoken to him, let us not fight againſt God*; therefore, that Apoſtle, when he had informed King *Agrippa*, *Acts* xxvi. 13, 14. that he *ſaw on the Road at Noon Day, a Light above the Brightneſs of the Sun, ſhining from Heaven round about him, and therewith heard a Voice ſpeaking to him*; what he adds, that *he was not diſobedient to it*, muſt needs have the Conſciences of all concur, to approve him for. But to add no more Obſervations on this Head of Revelation, it ſurely deſerves ſome Notice, that the vaſt Scheme of Things, which Jeſus ſent, and ſignified by an Angel, unto his Servant *John* (to be teſtified to the Churches) was introduced, by a great Voice, as of a Trumpet, heard behind him, *Rev.* i. 10, 12. and the Apoſtle turning towards the Voice, that ſpake with him, ſaw and heard, all the reſt of the many Viſions in that Book.

§ 13.

§ 13. There is a Tradition receiv'd among the *Hebrew* Rabbies, that after the *Jews* Return from *Babylon*, and their Building of the Second Temple, they had in it the Use of a Voice or Eccho, which they call'd *Bath-kol*, that is, *the Daughter of a Voice*; as it were, one Voice proceeding out of another, in the manner of an Eccho. Some think, it was with distinct and plain Words; others not: However, this Matter be, it ought not to be confounded with the manner of Voices, herein recited to be heard by the Prophets; seeing the *Jews* themselves, who deliver us this Tradition, do sufficiently distinguish it from them. It being our Business therefore, to build only, upon what is of more Authority than human Traditions, touching Divine Revelation; let us now proceed, to that of Prophetick Vision in Scripture.

CHAP. V.

Concerning Prophetick Visions in Scripture.

§ 1. THE true Meaning of the Word *Prophet* in Scripture being a Person to whom God any Way reveals Himself; the Way of Vision was so generally used, by the Sovereign Disposer of his own Benefits, that until the Time of *Samuel*, the Prophet was called by no other Term than a SEE-ER; which I take to be the Sense of 1 *Sam.* ix. 9. *He that is now called a Prophet, was beforetime called a Seer*; for we find the Word, SEE-ER, (that is, of Visions) continued long after the Date of that Text, nay, even throughout the Old Testament, and is used to express the same Definition of a Person, as the Word PROPHET; for Proof of which, we need look no further than the *English* Translation, tho' much might be added even to that, on this Head. Thus, in the next Verse but one, to the Text above, *Samuel* himself continues to be called a SEE-ER; and in the following Generation, the Terms were synonimous as we find; for 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 11. *The Word of the Lord came to the Prophet Gad, David's SEE-ER saying*, &c. The like Application of both Words indifferently, may be

obſerv'd of *Heman*, *Iddo*, *Hanani*, and *Jeduthun*, where they are ſeverally named; but what is more conſiderable, the Word SEE-ERS continues to be uſed, to expreſs *Prophets* in general, even throughout the Old Teſtament; ſo that after the Conqueſt of *Samaria* by the *Aſſyrians*, it is ſaid, 2 *Kings* xvii. 13. *The Lord teſtified againſt Iſrael, by all the Prophets, all the Seers.* So alſo when *Manaſſeh* King of *Judah* was carried captive into *Babylon*, we have Mention of the *Seers*, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18. *that ſpake to him in the Name of the Lord.* Theſe two Inſtances ſhew the Continuance of that Appellation for Prophets, near to the End of the two Kingdoms; and what may ſufficiently confirm the ſame is, that the People of *Judah* are charged by the Word of the Lord, in the Mouth of *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxx. 10. *for a rebellious People, lying Children, Children that will not hear the Law of the Lord, which ſay to the SEE-ERS, ſee not, and to the Prophets, propheſy not.*

§ 2. Now that in the Places above-cited, SEE-ERS are not put under any Diſtinction from PROPHETS, but are both uſed as Terms of the ſame Signification, will be beyond Doubt, if we conſider that, VISION and PROPHECY are likewiſe in the holy Writings ſo uſed, both of them, to expreſs the very ſelf ſame Thing, tho' properly they may be different. Thus the Book of the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, has for Title, *The Viſion which he ſaw concerning Judah*: In like Manner, *the Words of Amos, which he ſaw, concerning Iſrael*, is the Preface of that Prophet: *The Viſion of Obadiah* makes his: *The Word of the Lord that came to Micah which he ſaw concerning Samaria* and *Jeruſalem*, initiates the Prophecies by him: *The Book of the Viſion of Nahum*, are the Key to his: *The Burden* (or Prophecy) *which Habakkuk the Prophet did ſee*, is the Introduction there. Theſe then, according to the Letter, are all SEE-ERS, and give us Viſion for their Commiſſion, and the Foundation of their Prophecies, and of the inſpir'd Writings bearing their Names: And if we add to them, *Ezekiel*, *Jeremiah*, *Daniel*, *Zechariah*, who exhibit us diſtinctly their Viſions, with *David* alſo, and *Solomon*, to whom God ſpoke in Viſion: Should we alſo recite *Moſes*, and the Patriarchs, and all the Prophets by Name, that are expreſly ſaid to have enjoyed that Communication from Heaven; ſhould we finally contemplate the whole Congregation of Diſciples, Men and Women, about an Hundred and Twenty, aſſembled together at the Day of *Pentecoſt*, unto whom

whom there appear'd (were ſeen) *cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, ſitting upon each of them*; we might rather doubt, whether every Prophet were not ſtrictly a SEE-ER, than imagine that the Word carried any Diminution of that of a PROPHET.

§ 3. But that Prophecy it ſelf, is often called *Viſion*, is what appears further manifeſt from the Declaration of the Divine Oracles; for, what we read, the *Burthen of the Beaſts of the South*, Iſa. xxx. 6. is in the 70 *Greek*, written in Capital Letters, *THE VISION OF THE BEASTS*; ſo that the Burden being but another Word, and of the ſame Signification in that Text with *Prophecy*, Viſion ſtands there, of parallel Meaning; ſo does it likewiſe in *Iſa.* xxix. 11. *the Viſion of all* [the Prophets, by the *Old Eng.* Tranſlation, *Chald.* all Prophecy] *is become unto you as a Letter ſealed*; wherefore *Habakkuk* who records us no Viſion of his actually, is commanded to write the Viſion, *Chap.* ii. 2. [*Chald.* the Prophecy] and the Senſe clearly ſhews it ſo to mean; in the ſame Senſe is that to be taken, 1 *Sam.* iii. 1. *In thoſe Days there was no open Viſion*: Thus again, *Prov.* xxix. 18. *Where there is no Viſion the People periſh*; and to ſum up the Matter, that of *Jeremiah* is plain to this Purpoſe, *the Law is no more, her Prophets alſo find no Viſion, from the Lord*, Lam. ii. 9.

§ 4. Whoever then will give himſelf Leave to reflect, upon what is here ſaid; and deliberately conſider, that not only St. *Paul* conjoins Viſions and Revelations of the Lord, but the Holy Spirit from one End of the ſacred Records to the other, does conſide ſo much to the Authority of Viſion, that we cannot find, but That of all Revelation muſt neceſſarily either ſubſiſt or decline with it; wherefore, whoſoever does maturely weigh Things, by the Sanctuary Ballance, and take the written Word for his Rule to judge by, cannot but be aſtoniſhed, whence that Univerſal Deluge of Profaneſs, and Contempt of Viſion ſhould ſpring up, among thoſe that are acquainted with the Scripture. But however unaccountable the ſame may ſeem to a conſiderate Mind, we may in the Proſecution of this Work, peradventure diſcover ſome of the ſecret Sources of this Deluge. But to ſuperſede at preſent that Enquiry, we are now to enter into a more exact Diſquiſition of what the Text affords on this Head, touching the Power of God, exerted in viſionary Diſplays of Himſelf.

§ 5.

§ 5. There is in Scripture ſometimes a Variation to the Eye, of the natural Object noted; as, when the *Moabite* Army looked upon the Water, 2 *Kings* iii. 22. and ſaw it as red as Blood, which was miraculouſly appointed of God to their Deſtruction, according to the Word of the Lord by *Eliſha*: Thus *Moſes* deſcending from Mount *Sinai*, the Skin of his Face ſhone, *Exod.* xxxiv. 30. ſo that *Aaron*, and all the Children of *Iſrael*, were afraid to come nigh him: Our Lord alſo on the Mount at Prayer, was transfigured before them, the Faſhion of his Countenance being alter'd, *Luke* ix. 29. and his Raiment became white and gliſtering: In like manner, thoſe that beheld *Stephen* before the Council, and *Acts* vi. 15. looked ſtedfaſtly on him, before he made his Defence, ſaw his Face, as it had been the Face of an Angel. Tantamount is the Power, obſtructing the Eye or Underſtanding, not to diſcern a natural Form; as 'tis remarked of *Mary*, who ſaw *Jeſus* after his Reſurrection, *John* xx. 14. *and knew not that it was he*; and the two Diſciples going to *Emmaus*, tho' they talked with our Saviour a good while, *Luke* xxiv. 16, 31. their Eyes were holden, that they ſhould not know him, till by the ſame Power which withheld, they were open'd again; wherefore when we read, *John* viii. 59. that *Jeſus hid himſelf, and went out of the Temple, going thro' the midſt of them*, and ſo paſt by; we need look no further to conceive how, than by the ſame Way of exerting his manifold Power.

§ 6. And as the ſuperadding of ſomewhat to the natural Form of Things, has in it one kind of the Operations of a Viſion; ſo there is an Appearance ſometimes mention'd in Scripture, which tho' it be clothed with a leſs diſtinct Form or Figure, yet being ſupernaturally wrought, does, properly enough, come under this Head of Viſion; for Inſtance, *Moſes* by the Command of God, put into the Breaſt-plate of Judgment, the *Urim* and *Thummim*, to be born by *Aaron* when he went in, before the Lord, *Exod.* xxviii. 30. The *Hebrew* Word for the *Breaſt-plate*, having Affinity to one that ſignifies *ſeeing*; and the *Greek* rendring it *Oracle*; moreover *Urim* ſignifying *Lights*, and rendred by the *Greek*, *Manifeſtation*; and it being certain from *Numb.* xxvii. 21. that the Uſe of theſe, was to enquire of God, and to receive an Anſwer of his Will, by them, in Matters of great Moment. From theſe Grounds, it is pretty clear,

clear, that there was ſomething viſionarily appearing on this Breaſt-plate, which ſilently beſpoke that Anſwer, for which the ſame was appointed. We know not, if we are to regard what the Rabbins add, that upon Enquiry of the Oracle by Prayer, on momentous Occaſions, the Holy Spirit came upon the High-prieſt, and he beholding the Breaſt-plate, ſaw therein, by the Viſion of Prophecy, the Anſwer expreſſed in Letters. But on theſe Accounts, we may underſtand the Words of *David* to *Zadock*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 27. *Art not thou a See-er*, properly to belong to him, as High-prieſt?

§ 7. Beſides this Sort of Viſionary Manifeſtation, leſs diſtinct, there was alſo upon the Tabernacle, conſtantly at Evening, *Numb.* ix. 15. *as it were the Appearance* [*Chald.* as the Viſion] *of Fire*, until the Morning; which being not real or natural, altho' cuſtomary; of conſequence muſt be a ſupernatural Repreſentation of it: The like may be obſerv'd in the ſame Place, of *the Cloud*, which cover'd the Tabernacle, when it was reared up; for this alſo was an extraordinary Teſtimony of God's Preſence, inſomuch that *Solomon* mentions touching the like, 1 *Kings* viii. 10, 12. *the Lord to dwell in the thick Darkneſs*; for at that Time, *the Cloud ſo filled the Houſe of the Lord, that the Prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter, becauſe of the Cloud, for the Glory of the Lord had filled the Houſe of the Lord.* Concerning which Cloud, as *Solomon* calls it *thick Darkneſs*, the *Chald.* bears, *a Cloud of Miſt*, and *Iſaiah* alluding to it, *Iſaiah* iv. v. ſays, *a Cloud and Smoke by Day*; we ſee however, the ſame is termed, *the Glory of the Lord*: Wherefore, in his extraordinary Manifeſtations, He is not always to be confined to the Appearances of Light and Flame; but even a Pillar of Cloud, and thick Darkneſs, may be the Signs of his Preſence, nay a Teſtimony of his Glory; who ſometimes veils Himſelf with *Clouds and Darkneſs round about Him*, Pſal. xcvii. 2. Wherefore, juſt before the Seven laſt Plagues to be poured forth from the Vials of the Wrath of God, *Rev.* xv. 8. *the Temple* (a Figure of the Church, correſpondently to that of *Solomon* afore-cited) *was filled with Smoke, from the Glory of God, and from his Power*; *and no Man was able to enter into the Temple.* In which Text, ſays Dr. *Walpool*, and others, the *Smoke* does prefigure ſome Darkneſs of immediate Divine Diſpenſation, to be exhibited in that Juncture to the Church. Now, as the pouring out of the Vials, is declared initiatory of the great

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Day of the glorious Government of our Lord on Earth; the Expoſition above, of the Smoke filling the Temple, does anſwer to the Deſcription given us of the Signs of that notable Period in *Joel* ii. 2. *Zeph.* i. 15. *Amos* v. 20. *Zech.* xiv. 7. *The Day of the Lord cometh, a Day of Darkneſs, and of Gloomineſs, a Day of Clouds and of thick Darkneſs,* wherein the World will be ſurprized, as a Family is by a Thief in the Night. To illuſtrate which Paſſage, touching the Temple's Dedication by *Solomon*, I have been the more large, becauſe Men are univerſally diſpoſed to conſtrue all the Emblems and Tokens of Darkneſs, in any Prophetick Manifeſtation, to be doubtleſs inconſiſting with the Father of Light. But to proceed,

§ 8. In the Diſcourſe upon the Apparition of Angels, we have had divers Inſtances, wherein the SEE-ER was ſo far from any Impreſſions, either of Terror or Trance, that he did not know them to be other than Men till they diſappear'd ſuddenly; and by a Parity of Reaſon one would think, a Man might ſee any other Sort of Viſion, and taking it for really and naturally That which it repreſented, not know the ſame to be ſo, till it vaniſh'd away. But as in the former Caſe of Angels appearing, there was not always an extatick Influence on the Perſon, the ſame will be evident alſo in this, of the ordinary Prophetick Viſions, whereof we are now to ſpeak; for as on the one Side, there are ſeveral Inſtances of Trance attending, enough to evince to Men, prone to Ridicule, that they are different from the Effects of a natural Cauſe; ſo on the other, there are alſo Inſtances of Viſion, without Trances, that no one might treat every thing of this kind for imaginary, ſeeing that ſometimes the free Enjoyment of the Senſes, and Intellect remain without Infringement, from the Influence of that Power that preſents it. But ſince the greateſt Reproach from the Profane, commonly ariſes upon the Mention of Extacy, and the Chriſtian alſo has learned therein to join Hands with the *Sadducee*, he the former is to be reminded, that nothing ought to be the Subject of Shame with him, which is ſo plainly written, even in the New Teſtament, as well as the Old.

§ 9. But as there will be Occaſion of more diſtinctly conſidering the Prophetick Extacy, under another Head; we ſhall here only take Notice, that to be *in the Spirit*, is to be for that Time, *out of the Uſe of the Senſes*; and no

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Wonder, when St. *John* tells us, that at the Sight of his Viſion, *Rev.* i. 10, 17. he fell down as dead; and St. *Paul* on the Mention of his Viſions and Revelations, recites it twice, that we ſhould the more heedfully obſerve it, that *whether he was in the Body or out of the Body* (when he had them) *he could not tell*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 1--4. *being caught up into Paradice, or the third Heaven*: But if St. *Paul* himſelf could not tell in the Extacy, whether he was in the Body or out of the Body, I think it muſt be but a vain Curioſity, to enquire, whether thoſe Paſſages in *Ezekiel*, and the *Revelations*, where 'tis ſaid, *the Spirit carried them away*, are to be underſtood of a local Removal of the Body, or not. Wherefore pretermitting this myſterious Circumſtance of Viſion without Examination, I paſs on to what is more apparent; tho' from thence we may juſtly deduce thus much, That it is unreaſonable to expect, that every Thing in the ſecret Operations of Viſion, ſhould be accountable for by Reaſon; when by our Chriſtian Profeſſion we allow, that the Ignorance of the Apoſtle in ſo material a Point of his, was no Objection to the Validity of it.

§ 10. As the Revelation God vouchſafes of Himſelf, has been obſerv'd, to be often in general repreſented to us, under the Term of Viſion; ſo the firſt of the New World after the Flood, that we have any Account, was favour'd with it, was *Abraham*, *Gen.* xii. 7. to whom He appear'd, and thereon, an Altar was built to Him, who ſo appear'd; on which Account, as well as any other, he ſtands recommended by the inſpir'd Writings, for the Father of the Faithful, and a Pattern to all the Children of Faith, who ſhould reverence and adore the Inviſible, upon the like ſupernatural Evidences, given of Himſelf. Therefore, when the ſame *Jehovah* diſcover'd Himſelf to *Iſaac*, He gives it as the ſole Reaſon of the Bleſſings there promiſed, *Gen.* xxvi. 2, 5. *that Abraham had obeyed his Voice*; and *Jacob* the Imitator of the ſame Faith, not at all offended with the Lameneſs or Hurt on his Thigh receiv'd in Viſion; nor with the Angel's excuſing to ſtay beyond Day-Break, ſaid to his Houſhold, and all about him, *Gen.* xxxv. 2, 3. *Put away the ſtrange Gods that are among you, and let us ariſe and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an Altar unto God, who was with me in the Way which I went.* So that, the very Foundation of all Religion ſpiritually paid, and the firſt erecting of Aſſemblies for

for Worship after the Flood, was built upon Visionary Revelation to these Patriarchs.

§ 11. And as the first Stones of a Church, were laid in the Family of *Abraham*, upon the Faith of Visions; so the first Step towards the calling of the whole Nation of the *Hebrews*, into a solemn Covenant-Relation unto God, and the open Worship of Him, was that Vision unto *Moses*, of a Bush flaming with Fire, and unconsumed; wherein the former Vouchsafements are tacitly recited, under the Style of *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* And this Establishment of his Church, upon the Foot of Visions, seems to be compleated more manifestly, *Exod.* xxiv. 9, 10. when *Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and Seventy of the Elders of Israel, went up and saw* [*Chald.* the Glory of] *the God of Israel, and under his Feet, as it were a paved Work of a Sapphire-Stone, and as it were the Body of Heaven in its Clearness.* And notwithstanding all the Freedom, wherewith the Lord of Glory, communicated Himself by Word, to *Moses*, yet there is a special Charge given him, to have Regard to the Visionary Part; for *see* (saith He) *that thou make all things, according to the Pattern shewed to thee in the Mount*, Heb. viii. 5.

§ 12. Thus having passed thro' some general Topicks, whereon Vision appears to have been the principal Foundation of all Reveal'd Religion; *First*, in the Family of *Abraham*; then, in the Church in the Wilderness; then, by the antient Term of See-er, (as the sole Denomination of a Prophet;) then, by the Attestation of great Part of those Prophets, whose Writings are transmitted to us; and by the frequent Use of the Holy Spirit, to express all Revelation under the Word, Vision: Having also already given a considerable Number of Instances, of the Faith of the Saints, in the Apparition of Angels, and in Visions of the Night, it might seem needless to insist any more here on it: But that the Order of this Treatise requires, we should add some Particulars, to clear up a little the Method of God's Vouchsafement, in this Way also; however, seeing that a just Discourse of Ænigmatical Visions, would require the Recital of great Part of the Books of *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Zechariah*, and the *Apocalypse*; and indeed the turning over anew the whole Body of Holy Scripture; the subsequent Instances are to be consider'd, but as a small Scrap of what may be produced, upon that Head.

§ 13.

§ 13. When *Balaam* ſaw *Iſrael* abiding in his Tents, according to their Tribes, *Numb.* xxiv. 2, 4. *the Spirit of God came upon him*; [*Chald.* the Spirit of Prophecy from the Preſence of the Lord reſted upon him; *Arab.* the Prophetick Spirit deſcended upon him; *Vulg. Lat.* the Spirit of God ruſhed upon him;] whereupon we ought to obſerve, that the Text is as clear as any other in the Bible, without a Shadow of Doubt from thence, and the Subject of his Prophecy enſuing, carries lively Lineaments in it, of the Holy Spirit; and the more the Bent of this wicked Man was for Miſchief, the more the Power of the Almighty was demonſtrated, in counter-working him, to utter Divine Oracles; for if the Man of God (or Prophet) ſpake always not of himſelf, but as carried to it by the Holy Spirit; how ſhould others know that That Propheſying came not by the Will of the Man, better than when it came in a direct Oppoſition to the Will of that very Man, as in the Caſe of *Balaam*? And is it more inconſiſtent with the Spirit of God, when ruſhing upon, and reſting on *Balaam*, to make him FALL (into a Trance) than to do the like on thoſe holy Men, *Abraham*, *Daniel*, *John*, and others, who fell alſo as dead? And whether during this Trance, his Eyes were *open or ſhut*, is a Matter ſo indifferent, that the *Hebrew* Text, given by Divine Inſpiration, has here alone uſed a Word, which the greateſt Clarks cannot determine, whether it mean *the one* or *the other*: Leaving therefore thoſe that delight in it, to jangle about Words, to no Purpoſe; the ancienteſt Tranſlation, the *Greek*, inſtead of the Man whoſe Eyes were open, renders it, *the Man who was truly a SEE-ER*; which *Balaam* might be, as well with his Eyes ſhut as open; otherwiſe what are thoſe Viſions of the Night or Dreams, which (as already noted) are often in Scripture ſaid to be *ſeen*? and moreover the natural Eye cannot be ſuppoſed, in a Trance or deep Sleep, in an Extacy or Deprivation of the Senſes, when Men are as dead (and know not whether they are in the Body or no) to have any Part, in what is affirmed of *Balaam* here, that *he ſaw the Viſion of the Almighty*.

§ 14. It is not indeed the Way of the Spirit, to chooſe for his Inſtruments, the vileſt among Men, ſuch as *Balaam*, muſt be accounted of; nevertheleſs, this Inſtance alone, ſhould be a ſufficient Caution, againſt Man's Preſumption, to limit Infinity in Wiſdom, or preſcribe Bounds to Him,

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who gave all his Creatures their Intellect, and of Conſequence muſt have Underſtanding, (for the Direction of his own Ways) ſuperior to theirs; but that He has not confined himſelf, to ſpeak his Oracles only by the holy, this Inſtance of *Balaam* is not alone; for, ſcarce can we expreſs a higher Kind or Degree of Crime, than what we find in the Old Prophet of *Bethel*, who falſly and with Intent to deceive (as the Hiſtory acquaints us) affirmed, that an Angel had ſpoken to him, by the Word of the Lord; and yet even in the Fact of High Treaſon againſt the Majeſty of Heaven, 1 *Kings* xiii. 18, 20. *The Word of the Lord* [*Chald.* the Word of Prophecy from the Lord,] came indeed unto this Impoſtor; wherefore, ſurely, theſe two, without *Caiaphas*, *Judas*, and others, are abundantly ſufficient to curb the Raſhneſs of thoſe, who would even put the Bit into their Maker's Mouth.

§ 15. In Faith of the Viſions ſet before him, it was, that *Micaiah* with open Face could ſtand unſhaken, before the angry Looks of King *Ahab*, at the Head of his Army, and bear the Inſults of Four Hundred Prophets, in that Preſence; the Account of which Viſions, 1 *Kings* xxii. 17---23. affords us much Variety in that Manifeſtation; the firſt of *Sheep ſcatter'd on the Hills, without a Shepherd*, afforded a Repreſentation, nearly reſembling the Matters of Fact ſignified by it; the other is more myſterious and enigmatical, *viz.* that of all the *Hoſt of Heaven, ſtanding on the right and left Hand of the Throne above*, by which ſome underſtand the good and evil Angels ſo ranked: However that be, the Spirit that therein came forth, and ſtood before the Lord, had a Commiſſion from God, to perſwade and prevail, to the Deſtruction of *Ahab*. But the Application which *Micaiah* makes of this latter Viſion, yields ſtill more Difficulties to human Reaſon, how to unfold; for ſays he, *the Lord hath put a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all theſe thy Prophets, and the Lord hath ſpoken evil concerning thee.*

§ 16. If, as we have ſaid, the Night-Viſions or Dreams are always ſeen without the Inſtrumentality of the Bodily Eye; and Viſions in the Night, or by dark, profit nothing by it; if alſo thoſe in a Trance, or Deprivation of the Senſes, do ſee and hear things (ſometimes) unutterable, being like Men dead, as divers Texts do aſſert; if alſo we believe, according to the Scripture, many Things of

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the inviſible Agency of Angels, as that they encamp round about them that fear God; that they are ſent forth to miniſter to the Heirs of immortal Glory; that they are preſent in religious Aſſemblies, and divers other Things of like kind; why ſhould we encourage ſo groſs a Conceit, and ſo oppoſed to the Analogy of Faith, as to think, that where an Angel is preſent, the natural Eye muſt needs ſee him? And that he who pretends to ſee them, when other cannot, of conſequence forfeits among Chriſtians, any claim to Reaſon, and a ſober Mind? For the Angel was preſent, when the Aſs whereon *Balaam* rode ſaw him; and yet the Maſter did not, till the Lord *open'd the Eyes of Balaam*, *Num.* xxii. 30. Thus was it with *Eliſha*'s Servant, when the Prophet ſaid, thoſe that *were with* them, were more numerous than the *Syrian* Army all around; and yet the young Man ſaw nothing of the Chariots and Horſes of Fire, covering the Mountain round about, till *Eliſha* prayed, and the Lord *open'd the Eyes* of that Servant, 2 *Kings* vi. 17. Thus alſo, *Daniel* affirms poſitively, that when he ſaw a Viſion glorioufly reſplendant, *Dan*. x. 7. the Men that were with him ſaw it not. *Ezekiel* too had one given to himſelf, whilſt ſitting with the Elders about him. We are not therefore to wonder, that when *Jeſus* appeared to *Paul* on the Road, thoſe that were with him, *Acts* ix. 7. ſaw no Man; let us then conclude, that the natural Eye, without ſupernatural Influence from Him that made it, (that is, *the Lord opening it*) can no more diſcern, what conſtitutes a Viſion, than a meer rational Man can lay hold of the Inviſible Objects of Faith. But if this Matter needed any further Proof, we might cite all thoſe in Teſtimony of it, who converſed with Angels in Scripture, and yet knew it not, till they diſapear'd.

§ 17. It may eaſily be obſerv'd, that the Viſions here quoted, are not fully deſcribed; my Purpoſe being rather to inſiſt, on the Circumſtances and Manner attending, than the Subjects of them; accordingly, when *Iſaiah* ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a Throne, and his Train filling the Temple, what occurs remarkable to our preſent Purpoſe is, that he cryed out at the Sight, *Iſa.* vi. 5, 8. *Wo is me, for I am put to Silence*; (for ſo the ſame *Hebrew* Word is rendred, *Chap.* xv. 1.) and being dumb, or unable to ſpeak, he reflects upon his unclean Lips, and Unfitneſs to be the Mouth of God, until the Coal from the Altar touched them; and then he adds, *Here am I, ſend me*: Other remark-

able Effects on himself, the same Prophet acquaints us to attend him, on the like Occasion. *Chap.* xxi. 2--4; wherein he gives not a Detail of the Vision; but probably the Representation was as dismal, as the former gracious; for says he, *a grievous Vision is declared unto me, therefore are my Loins filled with Pain; Pangs have taken hold upon me, as the Pangs of a Woman that travaileth; I was bowed down at the hearing of it, I was dismayed at the seeing of it; my Heart panted, Fearfulness affrighted me, the Night of my Pleasure hath he turned into Fear unto me.* After so clear Declarations of Sorrows attending, joined with the more dismal State of Fainting and Sickness in *Daniel*, as well as the Lameness of *Jacob*, and the Blindness of St. *Paul*; what can more surprize us, than to hear Men well versed in the Scripture touching other Matters, affirm, That all Injuries to the Body, are incompatible with the gracious and good Spirit to inflict, in any of his Communications unto Men? Let us cease therefore, from the fond Reasonings of Man, in these sublime Things; for wherein is he to be accounted of?

§ 13. The glorious Vision of *Isaiah* abovemention'd, ended without other Signification given, than of personal Comfort, and Establishment to himself; but behold, in the Case of *Jeremiah*, we have two set before us, *Chap.* i. 13--16. xxiv. 1--10. the one of a Seething Pot, the other of two Baskets of Figs; both contemptible in the Figures seen, but yet by Him, to whom Interpretations belong, ennobled by the Explanation of them annexed, beyond that Majestick one to *Isaiah*: How untraceable therefore are his Steps! and his Ways passing the accounting for, by Man! *Jeremiah* understood not of himself, but the Explication of the Things seen, must be due to the same Hand that tendred them. And this Manner of first presenting the Visionary Figures, and then adding by Voice, the Signification of them, shews us more clearly what is meant sometimes by *the Lord speaking in Vision.* Here also we see, as by divers other Presidents, that when ever some common and less noble Things of the Earth, are represented to the Prophet, by the Power of the Invisible, they are not to be despised on that Account.

§ 19. Among the first Words of the Prophecies of *Ezekiel*, the Divine Manifestation to him, is described by three Circumstances; First, *the Hand of the Lord was upon him*; [*Chald.* The Spirit of Prophecy from before the Lord rested

ed on him,] which in the Scripture Phraſe, is of the ſame Import on this Occaſion, with the other Expreſſions *the Spirit fell* [or ruſhed] *upon*, and St. *John*'s *being in the Spirit*; all of them, including and meaning, ſome extatick Impreſſions on the Body. *Secondly*, he *ſaw Viſions* of God, being by the River *Chebar* among the Captives, wherefore it ſeems the reſt did not perceive them: For therein, *Thirdly*, *the Word of the Lord came expreſly* unto him. In which Circumſtances, as deſcribed, there is a ſupernatural Power felt, by the bodily Senſation, with a Manifeſtation as to the Eye by Viſion, and to the Ear by Voice *expreſs'd*; wherefore the Prophet's Commiſſion being ſo atteſted to himſelf, tho' the Tenour of his Meſſage by it be, *Go and tell a People*, Iſa. vi. 8, 10. *Hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not; make the Heart of this People fat*, [*Chald.* beſotted,] *and make their Ears heavy, and ſhut up their Eyes*: What however can the Prophet, on the aboveſaid Evidence to himſelf, juſtly do, but to ſay with *Iſaiah*, Chap. l. 5, 8. *The Lord God hath open'd mine Ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back; I gave my Back to the Smiters, and my Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair; I hid not my Face from Shame and ſpitting; for the Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded; therefore have I ſet my Face like a Flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed, for he is near that juſtifieth me.*

§ 20. All thoſe three Teſtimonies of the Heavenly Power on *Ezekiel*, are by him recited to concur again, in the Eighth Chapter, whilſt he ſat in his Houſe, and the Elders of *Judah* before him: But there is not the leaſt Ground given us to think, that thoſe Elders heard or ſaw, what the Prophet in the Viſion then did: Nay, on the contrary, 'tis certain they did not; for ſuppoſing they had, the Revelation then muſt have been as well to them, as him; which is inconſiſtent with the Scope of the Text, that affixes it only to *Ezekiel*. Indeed, as to *the Hand of the Lord God that* FELL there, *upon him*, ſome Commentators ſay that the Word FELL ſpeaks a Violence and Suddeneſs upon him, as if *Thunder-ſtruck*; and ſo it muſt needs be, that the Elders were Witneſſes to the Attendances of the Extacy. Now among the Viſions of *Ezekiel*, that in a Manner compoſe his whole Book, there are two in their kind ſo particular, they deſerve a ſpecial Remark: In one of them, *Ezek.* ii. 9, 10. *an Hand was* reached *unto him, with a Scroll of a Book*, which was ſpread before him,

and it was written within and without, (and it seems he read it, for) *there was written therein, Lamentations, and Mourning, and Woe:* In the other, *Chap.* viii. 7--12. he being brought to the Door of the Temple-Court, he saw a Hole in the Wall; and he by Command, digging in the Wall, found a Door, and was bid to go in at it; so he *went in, and saw, and behold every Form of creeping Things, and abominable Beasts, and all the Idols of the House of Israel* were *pourtrayed upon the Wall round about*; then the Lord said unto him, *Son of Man, hast thou seen what the Elders of the House of Israel do in the dark, every Man in the Chambers of his Imagery? for they say, the Lord seeth us not.* Now, if we consider the dark Manner of the Introduction in this Vision, that the Prophet has it represented, as if he was digging thro' a Wall, into some Vault under Ground; and the End of it, which was to draw a Figure, of what the Elders did in the dark; we may conclude, that the Images pourtrayed upon the Wall, if they bore a Symmetry to the whole Scheme, were rather drawn after the Manner of *Metzo-tinto*-Prints in the Shades of Black and White, than the lively Colours of other Pictures.

§ 21. I confess my self not capable to understand how God's speaking *Face to Face* for Clearness, with *Moses*, stands opposed to his speaking by Visions and dark Speeches to other Prophets; if Visions must necessarily be clearly understood by the Seer: But as in some Particulars already we have noted, and in many more Visions here cited, the like might have been observ'd, that at the Instant of their being seen, the very Beholder did not know the Signification of them, which appears further in that to *Peter* for after the withdrawing of that Scene of Beasts, and creeping Things, *Acts* x. 16, 17. tho' it had been repeated three Times, and a Voice conjoined with it, yet he *doubted in himself what the Vision he had seen, should mean.* And when *Daniel* understood not, all the Answer is, *Go thy way for the Words are sealed,* Dan. xii. 9. And notwithstanding that the Gift of interpreting Dreams and Visions, in *Joseph, Zechariah,* (2 *Chron.* xxvi. 5.) and *Daniel,* is declared to be distinct from that of seeing them; yet what most puts human Understanding to the Blush, in this Matter, and of consequence exalts the Prerogative of the Divine, (for *it is the Glory of God to conceal a thing,* Prov. xxv. 2.) is the giving of Visions which are not to be divulged, *Rev.* x. 4. and the leaving upon Record, so many Ænigmatical Visions

stand

ſtampt with a Seal of Authority enforcing them, ſuch as no other Parts of Scripture, have more ſolemnly affixed to them; which yet are not certainly to be underſtood by meer human Reaſon; for in the Nine laſt Chapters of *Ezekiel*, which contain one entire myſterious Viſion, unfathomable in its Depth, even to this Day, the Prophet is commanded *to behold with his Eyes*, Ezek. xl. 4. xliii. 11. *to hear with his Ears, and to ſet his Heart upon all that ſhould be ſhewn him, that he might declare all that he ſaw, to the Houſe of Iſrael*; and in particular, *to ſhew them the Form of the Houſe, and the Faſhion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the Forms thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and all the Forms thereof, and all the Laws thereof; and WRITE it in their Sight, that they may keep the whole Form thereof, and all the Ordinances thereof, and do them.* After a like ſort, that meerly Prophetical Book of the New Teſtament, entitled with Diſtinguiſhment, The REVELATION, begins with a peculiar Benediction; *Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the Words of this Prophecy, and keep* (or heedfully obſerve) *thoſe Things, which are written therein*; and ends with a moſt emphatical Commination, *for I teſtify unto every Man, that heareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, If any Man ſhall add unto theſe Things, God ſhall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book: And if any Man ſhall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy, God ſhall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and from the Things which are written in this Book*: Unto both which, let us add alſo, the cloſe of the myſterious Viſions of *Daniel*; *Go thou thy Way till the End be, for the Words are cloſed up and ſealed till the Time of the End: Many ſhall be purified and made white and tryed, but the Wicked ſhall do wickedly; and none of the Wicked ſhall underſtand, but the Wiſe ſhall underſtand. Bleſſed is he that waiteth.*

§ 22. Having already taken Notice, that *the Pillar of Cloud*, before or behind the Camp in the Wilderneſs, is joined with the Angel's ſo removing; we now proceed to ſhew, that the Apparition of Angels in the Scripture, is not limited to the human Form: And here it is worthy of Obſervation, that the Word *Zeraphim* means a Flame of Fire: And thus an Angel appear'd to *Moſes* in a *Flame of Fire*; and the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, the Lord hath made his Celeſtial Miniſters ſuch: In another Place he adds, *The Chariots of God are Twen-*

ty Thousand, even Thousands of Angels; as they appear'd to *Elisha*'s Servant, and in transporting *Elias*; and when they are represented an Host, or Army on *Horseback*, there, the Figure of the Horse, is as much an essential Part of them, as that of the Man, or of the Chariots, to which in other Places the Horse is joined; nay, in *Zech.* i. 8-11. *Horses* alone are interpreted to be Angels: Furthermore, in *Rev.* viii. 13, where an Angel flew in the midst of Heaven, divers good Authorities give the Text, *an Eagle flew*, &c. Neither can it be thought incompatible with an Angel, to appear in that Form, seeing the *Four Beasts*, seen by *Ezekiel* and *John*, among various Forms, had somewhat of the Eagle; and the Fourth Beast in the *Revelations*, was like *a flying Eagle*. The Four Beasts in *Ezekiel* went whither *the Spirit* (or their Mind, *Hebr.* their Will, *Chald.*) was to go, and those in St. *John*, incessantly give Glory, and Honour, and Thanks to Him, that sat on the Throne; which shews them to be intellectual Agents. Wherefore, 'tis no Diminution to Angels, to appear in such like Forms. Much to the same Import, may be observ'd also from the *Hebrew*, touching *the Wheels* in *Ezekiel*, that they were Self-Movers, or voluntary Agents, and therefore Angels; who may as well assume the Form of a Wheel alone, as when it is conjoined with a Chariot. *The Morning Stars* in *Job*, *which sang together*, at the Creation, are by the *Greek* and *Chaldee* (the best Interpreters of the Text) construed, *all the Angels*; and in St. *John*, the Seven Stars are the Angels of the Seven Churches. Thus, the Star which fell (or went swiftly) from Heaven unto the Earth, *Rev.* ix. 1. xx. 1. to whom was entrusted the Key of the Bottomless Pit, to open it, was certainly an Angel, as well as he, who was entrusted with the same Key, to shut it up again. Wherefore, there can be little Difficulty to ascribe the same Thing to that Star, which went before, and conducted the Wisemen by Day, as well as Night, and pointed out the particular House in the Town of *Bethlem*; seeing such Direction does not consist with the Nature of a Planet in the Heavens.

§ 23. We might add several other Figures, wherein Angels have appear'd: But these being sufficient to shew, that it is absurd by the Tenour of Scripture-Rule, to say they do not appear, unless they assume the human Form; therefore it was meerly in Compliance with the common Apprehensions about them, that I supported the Discourse of Angels appearing in human Form, from this of other open Visions: For since, as I have noted be-

fore,

fore, the Essence of an Angel is not seen, by the Form (whatever it be) that appears; for then they must have always been known, which they often were not, even when exhibiting themselves in the Similitude of Man; it follows necessarily, that the Agency or Instrumentality of Angels in Divine Revelation, ought no more to be excluded in other Visions, than in those that bore in them a Likeness of Manhood; seeing that we find that in the Visions of *Ezekiel*, St. *John*, and elsewhere, as before-mention'd, they appear'd under other Similitudes besides that of Man. And in the Account already given, of Divine Revelation by Dreams and articulate Voices, their Agency is positively and beyond Question asserted. Wherefore, tho' I can see no Reason why any should doubt, considering what is here said above, whether Angels have any Part, in this other Sort of Visions, whereof we now treat; I shall notwithstanding, add something more to clear it.

§ 24. The Chariot of Fire, and Horses of Fire, (a Similitude that is ascribed to Angels) that were seen by *Elisha*, to carry up *Elias* into Heaven, who can doubt to be represented by an Angel? Since without any such Vision exhibited, they might have translated him, as *Obediah* on another Occasion hinted. Furthermore in another Vision, after the *Appearance* of the Likeness of the Glory of the Lord, *Ezek.* ii. 2. where it is said *the Spirit entred into Ezekiel and set him upon his Feet*, [the *Greek* has it, the Spirit came to him, and took him. and lifted him up, and set him upon his Feet;] so that it is pretty plain, the Spirit that did all these Ministerial Services, was an Angel. Thus also in another Place, *Ezek.* viii. 2, 3. where he describes a *Likeness*, as the Appearance of Fire from the Loins downwards, and upward as the Colour of Amber; that Likeness put forth an Hand, and took him by a Lock of his Head, and the Spirit (or Likeness) lifted him up, between the Earth and the Heaven, and shew'd him the Visions following: Thus when *Daniel* had seen the Vision of a *Ram* and *He-goat*, and sought for the Meaning; *then behold, there stood before him, as the Appearance of a Man, Dan.* viii. 2, 17. who open'd to that Vision: Wherefore, in this latter Case, who can distinguish between the Power exhibiting the Vision, and that which is employ'd to explain it? as in those of *Ezekiel*, to separate the Dignity, that shew'd the Appearance and Likeness mention'd, from that which produced the other Figures in his Visions, is too difficult; and therefore I must

conclude them all, that is, all Manner of Vision, under the same undivided Way of Divine Operation, to be manifested by the Instrumentality of an Angel.

§ 25. Whoever will please to look into the Second and Third Chapters of *Zechariah*, will find that the Angel, which is defined to affect him in the former, did in the latter, shew him, *Joshua* the High Priest, with divers Circumstances, there represented: And so, in the beginning of the Fourth Chapter, the Angel came again, and waked him, as a Man that is wakened out of his Sleep, and then presented before him several Things in Vision, which upon the Prophet's Enquiry what they meant, are by the Angel explained to be, the Word of the Lord unto *Zerubbabel*: In the latter Part of the Fourth Chapter, and in the Fifth and Sixth, the Angel of the Lord accompanies him, in divers other Visions, and with an easie Familiarity expounds them: Wherefore, if the Scripture be taken for a conclusive Rule to judge by, touching the Manner of Divine Revelation, as well as it is in all other Points; the entire Believer of it, can never allow himself to imagine, but the Agency of Angels subordinate to the Deity, is as great in this Way of Divine Manifestation by Vision, as in those of Dream and Voice, as in *Rev.* xxii. 16. it is said, *I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify these things*: And among the Variety of outward Appearances in Vision, those that are not in the proper Similitude of Men, are equally authentick, and as much thro' the Instrumentality of Angels, as those that are so only; for, the supream unaccountable Disposer of his own Ways has so order'd it, that sometimes those that appear in the human Form, have no more than a Likeness to the Similitude of the Sons of Men, *Dan.* x. 16. And at other times they have each of them Six Wings, *Isa.* vi. 2. and at other Times, the human Form is monstrously confounded with that of brute Beasts, as occurs in the Visions of *Ezekiel*, and St. *John*. Neither is it inconsistent with an Angel, to assume the Form of a Woman in his Ministry to Men, as appears by *Zech.* v. 7--11. and *Ezek.* viii. 14. which was universally acknowledg'd by the Testimony of the Primo-primitive Christian Church, that admitted the Visions of *Hermas* for Canonical Scripture, wherein several times Angels are mention'd to appear to him, assuming That Form in their Communications with him; and also in those early Times, an Angel appear'd to several, with clear Evidences of his Divine Commission, cloathed with the Form of

Potamiana,

Potamiania, a celebrated Virgin martyr'd, as will more fully appear in the Sequel hereof.

§ 26. Upon all that has been said, I am perswaded, that the Authority of Vision will appear so sacred, that no other Way of Divine Revelation, can be esteem'd worthy of more Acceptation with the Faithful: But alas! how few are they, in this Respect? When any other Instances of Divine Manifestation, by Vision, Dream, and Voices Heavenly, other than those particular ones, mention'd in the sacred Text, come under Consideration; seeing that in such a Case, the most Religious make no Scruple now-a-days, to joyn Hands with the *Sadducee* and prophane Scoffer; or as the Psalmist terms it, *stand in the Way of Sinners, and sit down in the Seat of the Scornful*; and even with Emulation, strive to outdo him in the common Topicks of imputing them, either to the Whimsies of a diseased Brain, or the Effects of natural Melancholy, or the Doatings of a Head, wholly entoxicated with musing upon Revelations. And this even Religious Men do, without Fear of accounting, at the Day of Judgment, for *every Idle Word*, that they shall speak on this Subject; tho' that *Commination* of our adored Saviour, is particularly connected with the most terrible of all Gospel Denunciations, touching the speaking a Word against the Holy Ghost; as may appear from *Math.* xii. 31, 32, 36.

§ 27. But knowing, from what shall be here under proved, that this was not the Manner of the first Christians, and that the Humour of Scoffing at such like Things, came in among them, with the Corruptions that denominate the Apostacy of the Church, as I shall also endeavour to make apparent; I am not pleading the Scripture-Presidents and Authorities forementiond, of Visionary Discoveries, to warrant the Indulging of a Credulity, of such Pretences to Revelation, as upon the due Examination of Circumstance, can with any Justice of Reasoning (even by such Rules of it, as in all other Cases are allow'd) be fairly imputed to the Discomposure of the Person's Brain. What we ought to say, is, that every Case must stand upon its own Foot, if a due Examination be allowed; and therein, if in any Age past, present or to come, a Man appearing to have Sobriety of Judgment, shall give an Account of like Things befallen him, which are not justly reducible to natural Causes, and which being divulged, do tend any Ways to Edification; I do not see, by what Authority from the Scripture,

ture, they ought to be deſpiſed; nor how we can turn them into Ridicule, without reproaching the Faith, of the moſt illuſtrious Saints in all Ages; and even caſting a Blemiſh upon the ſacred Text it ſelf. But becauſe there will be room, for more Argument on this Head elſewhere, we ſhall here proceed to the Examination of *Prophecy*, in the Proper and Specifick Senſe of the Word.

CHAP. VI.

Touching PROPHECY proper, or INSPIRATION Prophetick.

BEfore we enter upon that Way of Divine Communication, which I believe will be found the moſt generally uſed by Him, whoſe Meſſenger to the World, the Prophet always was, and wherein what he deliver'd, was the Word of the Lord; I ſhall take Notice very briefly, of ſome other very extraordinary Methods of the Holy Spirit's Operation, which do not uſually come under this Head.

§ 1. When *Ezekiel* had ſeen in Viſion, a Roll written within and without, the Spirit ſaid to him, *Son of Man, eat this Roll*, Ezek. iii. 1, 3. and ſo cauſed him to eat it, and fill his Bowels with it, and it was in his Mouth, as Honey for Sweetneſs; and then the Spirit ſaid, *Go, ſpeak with my Words unto them:* After a like Manner, St. *John* was commanded to take a little Book from an Angel, *Rev.* x. 9, 11. and *he took it out of the Hands of the Angel, and eat it up, and it was in his Mouth ſweet as Honey, and as ſoon as he had eaten it, his Belly was bitter*; whereupon the Angel ſaid to him, *Thou muſt propheſie again, before many Peoples.* Parallel to theſe two Patterns, *Jeremiah* ſays, *Chap.* xv. 16, 17, 18. *Thy Words were found, and I did eat them, and thy Word was unto me, the Joy and rejoicing of my Heart.* But in Correſpondence to the Bitterneſs in St. *John*, he immediately adds, *I ſat alone becauſe of thy Hand; for thou haſt filled me with Indignation; why is my Pain perpetual? and my Wound incurable? wilt thou be alto-*

gether

gether unto me as a Liar, and as Waters that fail? From all which collated Texts, there appears to have been a ſupernatural Impreſſion on the Senſe of TASTING, and that ſo delightful, as may well be conſtrued, figurative of the Joy that the Spirit of Prophecy carries uſually with it, in its firſt Infuſion, tho' in the Proceſs, it produces the Bitterneſs of Affliction as above-mention'd to the affected Perſon: Both the one and the other eventually to the Benefit of the Prophet; for at the Reſurrection of the Juſt, *one Star will differ from another in Glory.*

§ 2. But whatever be the Bitterneſs; *it is* rationally *impoſſible for thoſe* Heb. vi. 4, 6. *who have TASTED of the Heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have taſted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, if they ſhall fall away, to renew them again unto Repentance*; becauſe the ſame muſt neceſſarily be a moſt powerful Means of Grace, when heeded. Wherefore *Ezekiel*, before eating the Roll, has a Charge given him not to be rebellious, as the impudent and hard-hearted, and rebellious Houſe of *Iſrael* (the then Church) was; and after that juſt now cited petulant Complaint of *Jeremiah*, the Lord ſaid to him, *if thou return* (from it, and doſt not wholly fall away,) *then will I bring thee again, and thou ſhalt ſtand before me* (in the Prophetick Office) *and thou ſhalt be as my Mouth; return not thou to the Aſſembly of the Mockers, for I will ſave thee, and deliver thee out of the Hand of the wicked.* Thus *Jeremiah* was ſet as a Brazen Wall, againſt which, the terrible ones ſhould not prevail: And however it was better with *Samuel*, in that reſpect of the World's Contempt, his Danger was no leſs from its Smiles, in being univerſally known to be a Prophet; yet as to his being *ESTABLISHED to be a Prophet of the Lord*, 1 Sam. iii. 20. I know of no ſuch Word as *eſtabliſhed* in the Text; for the *Hebrew*, *Greek*, *Chaldee*, and *Vulg. Lat.* have it expreſly, *faithful*; the *Chald.* renders the Sentence, *he was faithful in the Prophetical Words of the Lord*; which it becomes every one to be, who ſtandeth before the Lord, in the Prophetick Office, to receive, and obey his Commands, without Reſerve, who is able to ſave and deliver from Men, as was promiſed *Jeremiah* and *Iſaiah*, or (which is better) to give him a Reward peculiar, in the Reſurrection of the Juſt. But becauſe from that Word, ESTABLISHED, ſome pretend that the Prophet's Commiſſion ſtands in Need of the Acknowledgment (and Verification as it were) of the exiſtent

ent Church, as that of *Samuel* universally had; I have taken the more Freedom, in the Cause of Divine Truth, to shew, that such a Claim, is as little warrantable by that Text alledg'd to maintain it, as 'tis condemn'd by the whole Tenour of Scripture throughout.

§ 3. After this Digression, which arose upon the supernatural Impression on the Sense of TASTING, emblematical of the Sweetness of the Prophetical Word; even as that of Manna is described most grateful, being also figurative of Christ, the true Manna from Heaven. In Concurrence with this Observation, St. *John* tells us, that when the *Lamb took the sealed Book out of the right Hand of Him that sat upon the Throne*, Rev. v. 8. *the Twenty four Elders fell down before the Throne, having every one of them, golden Vials full of Odours*; we therefore conceive, it is rational to think from thence, that there was to the Apostle, a supernatural Impression on the Sense of SMELL; nor can such a Construction be any ways injurious, seeing St. *Paul* mentions more than once, the *being a sweet Savour unto God*; and St. *John* figures the Gifts of the Spirit by the Emblem of anointing, which implies Odors: Moreover, the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, in setting forth the Glory of the Great High-priest, and Bridegroom of his Beloved, uses the like Metaphorical Expressions of odoriferous Ointment, Myrrh, Aloes, and Cassia, to figure out to us his blessed Effusions. And however this supernatural Impression on the SMELL, be now a common Subject of Mockery, (as is also that of Tasting) we shall find in the Sequel of this Treatise, it was not so among the primitive Christians. But referring it for the present to that Proof in the Case of *Polycarp*, and the Martyrs of *Lyons*; I now proceed to some others, of the more extraordinary Operations of the Spirit.

§ 4. The Spirit of the Lord endowed *Sampson* with marvellous Strength of Body, and yet not inherently, after the Manner of the Natural; but when the Spirit came upon him, even the very same Spirit, that was upon the Prophets; wherefore *Josephus* stiles him *a Prophet*, which in the larger Sense comprehends all those, who receive any Divine Revelation, or the Spirit of God extraordinarily: And thus St. *Paul* among the Catalogue of those, whose Faith in Divine Revelation (made to themselves mostly) was renowned, puts him with *Gideon*, and *Barak*, and *Jephthah*, and *David*, and *Samuel*, and the rest of the Prophets;

phets; for ſo the *Syr. Æthiop.* and ſome ancient Fathers write the Text, and the Annotators ſay, it ought to be therein underſtood, even tho' not expreſs'd. But *Sampſon* is not the ſole Inſtance of bodily Strength, given extraordinarily to the Prophet; for *Elijah*'s travelling forty Days and forty Nights without eating, argues the ſame; ſo *David* alſo acknowledges, that God enabled his Arms to break even a Bow of Steel, and made him, when but a Stripling, to overcome a Lion and a Bear: And certainly the Reſtauration of Youthful Vigour to *Abraham*, for many Years, after his Body was as good as dead, is without any Preſident in a Natural Way, at leaſt that we know of: Yet more marvellous is that of *Moſes* who in the Ninetieth *Pſalm* ſays, that if the Strength of Man attained to the Age of eighty Years, yet his very Strength was, even then, Labour and Sorrow; nevertheleſs, it is recorded of *Moſes* himſelf *Deut.* xxxiv. 7. *that he was an Hundred and Twenty Years old when he dy'd, and yet his Eye was not dim, nor his natural Force abated*; in which Text the *Hebrew* Word, rendred *Natural Force*, is ſo particular and emphatical, that in the Want of Ability ſignificantly to expreſs it, the Vulg. Lat. ſays, *his Teeth were not looſe*; the Gr. *his Gums were not waſted*; Chald. *the Clearneſs of the Beauty of his Countenance was not alter'd*; Syr. *his Cheeks had no Wrinkles*; Arab. *his moiſture was not abated*; Hebr. and Samarit. *his Greeneſs* (*viz* of Youth) *was not faded.*

§ 5. Touching theſe more extraordinary Influences, let us add, that *Solomon* had from the ſame Spirit, an Underſtanding of the Secrets of Nature; for he ſpake of Trees, *from the Cedar in Lebanon to the Hyſop ſprouting out of the Wall.* He ſpake alſo of Beaſts, and of Fowl, and of creeping Things, and of Fiſhes; ſo that in natural Philoſophy he was wiſer than all Men: Thus alſo political Wiſdom, was a Fruit of the ſame Spirit, to *Joſhua*, *Saul*, *Solomon*, and divers of the Judges; in particular *Othniel on whom the Spirit of the Lord came*, *Judg.* iii. 10. [*Chald.* the Spirit of Prophecy from the Preſence of the Lord reſted on him;] thus in another, very different Way of Adminiſtration, *Bezaleel*, *Exod.* xxxi. 3. was *filled with the Spirit of God* [*Gr.* the Divine Spirit, *Chald.* the Prophetick Spirit from before the Lord,] for Workmanſhip in Gold and Silver for the Uſe of the Tabernacle; afterwards *David* had alſo from the Spirit, 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 12-19. a Pattern for building the Temple, and Direction for the Services thereof;

thereof; moreover as the ſweet Pſalmiſt of *Iſrael* tells us, *Pſal.* xlix. 4. *He would open his dark Saying upon the Harp*; ſo *Aſaph*, *Judathan*, and *Heman* (whoſe inſpired Hymns we have to this Day) being all Prophets, are ſaid to propheſy with Harps and other Muſick, 1 *Chron.* xxv. 1--5. From whence it may be no eaſie Queſtion to ſolve, whether the Muſick it ſelf were not commanded, or even influenced by the Spirit, as well as the Subject of their Song.

§ 6. Moreover, what one Evangeliſt writes of our Saviour, that He by the Finger of God caſt out Devils, being by another related, that he, by the Spirit of God did it; ſerves to explain to us what is meant *Exod.* xxxi. 18. by the two Tables of Stone written with the Finger of God: and this being the firſt mention of writing, what the Spirit or an Angel did then, He afterwards inſpired others to do: Thus concerning the Building and Services of the Temple, *David* ſays, 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 19. *The Lord made me to underſtand in Writing by his Hand upon me.* And to King *Jehoram there came a Writing from the Prophet Elijah*, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 12--15. Thus when *Ezra* is termed a ready Scribe, he is believ'd inſpired to it, becauſe 'tis ſaid, the *Wiſdom of God was in his Hand, and the Hand of the Lord his God was upon him.* 'Tis certain, that *Iſaiah* had a Divine Command, to take him a great Roll, and write in it with a Man's Pen, a Prophecy receiv'd, *Iſa.* viii. 1. And in another Place *viz. Chap.* xxx. 8. to write on a Table, and note in a Book (a remarkable Prediction) that it might be for the latter Days, even for ever and ever: So likewiſe to *Jeremiah*, came the Word of the Lord, ſaying, *write thee, all the Words that I have ſpoken to thee, in a Book*, as may be ſeen in the 36th Chapter at large. The like Order to write, may be obſerv'd in *Habakkuk*, and in the Revelations of St. *John*, a Gift, peculiar, as I conceive, attending the Order, and not always pertinent to Prophecying.

§ 7. Having thus in brief touched upon ſeveral of the more extraordinary Ways of the Spirit of God, we come now to enquire into the moſt uſual and general Signification of PROPHECY, or PROPHETICK INSPIRATION, as it is defined, and laid before us in the Senſe of Scripture. And here, becauſe by the Word PROPHET, the moſt of Men are willing now-a-days, to underſtand no more meant, than of a FORETELLER, DIVINER, or PROGNOSTICATOR;

and

and in conſequence, that Prophecy is the ſame in Senſe, and no other than Divination or Prognoſticating; it is neceſſary to obſerve, that the *Hebrew* uſes three Words to expreſs, what we write *Prophet*; which are *Roeh*, *Chozeh*, and *Nabi*: Thus, in 1 *Chron.* xxix. 29. *Samuel* is termed *Roeh*; *Gad*, *Chozeh*; and *Nathan*, *Nabi*. And yet in 1 *Sam.* iii. 20. xxii. 5. both *Samuel* and *Gad* are termed *Nabi*; ſo that by the indiſtinct and promiſcuous Uſe of theſe Words indifferently, it would ſeem, as if they bore one and the ſame Signification: Now, as to the two former, that is, *Roeh* and *Chozeh*, they give ſo diſtinct and certain a Sound of their Signification, that by the Conſent of all Etymologiſts in the *Hebrew*, they expreſs the Word, SEE-ER, or in the modern Phraſe, a VISIONAIR, one who perceives ſomething, ſupernaturally by the Eye; but the Word *Nabi* is hardly to be traced to any certain Root in the *Hebrew*, and thence it comes, that there are many different Gueſſes at it, and what proper Signification it ought to bear: Wherefore the Uncertainty of this Word's Propriety or diſtinct Signification, and the Uſe of it in the Text indifferently and undiſtinguiſhably, from *Roeh* and *Chozeh*, is a ſtrong Preſumption, that there was no conſiderable Difference, and therefore that it bore a parrallel Senſe with *Roeh* and *Chozeh*, which uncontrovertedly mean, a See-er or Viſionair: Thus *Buxtorf*'s *Lexicon* ſays, the Word *NABI*, *properly means a Man to whom God revealeth Secrets*, which Definition by one of the greateſt Maſters of the *Hebrew* plainly manifeſts, that there is no proper Signification of it to be traced out; and therefore, we muſt ſit down content, either not to know what it means, or elſe conclude from what is ſaid above, that it was ſynonimous with *Roeh* and *Chozeh*.

§ 8. From what has been ſaid touching the Words, uſed by the Inſpired *Hebrew* Text, for PROPHET, thus much is certain, that two of them expreſs clearly a SEE-ER; and the third gives only (to us at this Diſtance) a general Sound, without any proper Signification: However, this it very remarkable, that among the various Interpretations of the Word *Nabi* by the Learned, there is none of them that affix to it the Senſe of *a Foreteller*, *Diviner*, *or Prognoſticator*, that is, one that predicts Things to come: So that from the Negative, generally allowed, touching the Word *Nabi*, and from the poſitive clear Senſe of the Words *Roeh* and *Chozeh*, we may concluſively determine, that the common Acceptation of the Word *Prophet* (to mean a *Foreteller*

or

or *Predicter*) has not the leaſt Shadow of Foundation, from the Old Teſtament inſpired Text; nevertheleſs, the Explication of the Word *Nabi* given in *Buxtorf*, that is, *a Man to whom God revealeth Secrets*, is therefore worthy Conſideration, becauſe it is a Definition agreeable to the Senſe of Scripture throughout, which we entirely appeal to, and ought to acquieſce in, for the defining *a Prophet*; whether it be by Voice, or Dream, or Viſion, or Inſpiration, he to whom God revealeth Secrets, is a Prophet; and any Manner of ſuch Revelation, does formally conſtitute him ſo.

§ 9. Having thus evinced from the three *Hebrew* Words, ſignifying *Prophet*, that there is not the leaſt Shadow from thence, to fix upon it the Definition of a Perſon that *foretells*; it muſt be acknowledg'd at the ſame Time, that the *Greek* (which bears the next Authority to the *Hebrew*, for the Senſe of the Old Teſtament) expreſſes the Word *Prophet* by one that means in the obvious Senſe to *foretell*. And this no doubt has given Occaſion, to the common Acceptation of it, in that Senſe: Wherefore, to reconcile this Diſagreement between the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Terms, we are driven of Neceſſity, to have Recourſe to the Scripture-Senſe annexed and conjoined, with the Word *Prophet*: And as this will appear from the Subject at large of this Treatiſe, we ſhall for the preſent here only take Notice, that the *Hebrew* Word *Nabi*, and the *Greek*, *Prophet*, are not abſolutely ſo wide, or diſtant in their Signification, but they may both be reconciled, ſo as eaſily to comport one with another, without Diſagreement. Taking it therefore for granted, that the *Hebrew* Word properly means one to whom God revealeth Secrets, then it follows, that every Man to whom God reveals Himſelf, by what Way ſoever, is a Prophet, in the large and more extended Senſe of that Word: Now the *Greek* Word προφητης, tho' in its uſual and common Acceptation it means a *Fore-teller*, yet it does admit of another Senſe alſo, for Proof whereof I appeal to the Explication given us of that Term in *Pool's Synopſis*, where on *Luke* i. 67. the Acceptation of that Word by the Criticks, is deliver'd thus; " προφητευειν, *to pro-*
" *phecy, is properly to SPEAK FOR, or in the Stead of*
" *another*, as a Proconſul ſtood in the Place of the Con-
" ſul (or a Vice-Chancellor repreſents the Chancellor, and
" the like) the *Greek* προ in Compoſitions, being of like
" Import with υπερ *for*, and being joined with φημι *to*
" *ſpeak*, the Signification of the compound Word amounts

" to

" to be, *to ſpeak for*: In this Senſe, the *Poets* are called " *Prophets of the Muſes*, that is, they ſpeak by Inſpiration " of the *Muſes*: Thus to make known the Will of God by " Revelation, or Miſſion from Him, is to propheſie; in " which Senſe Chriſt is a Prophet, and others." And in like Manner was *Aaron*, the Prophet of *Moſes*, *Exod.* iv. 16. vii. 1. where the Words of God to *Moſes* are, *Aaron thy Brother ſhall be thy Prophet, he ſhall be to thee inſtead of a Mouth, and he ſhall be thy Spokeſman unto the People.* If then, by this Explication, *Poets* are called Prophets (confirmed by *Titus* i. 12. becauſe ſpeaking by Inſpiration of the *Muſes*, and *Aaron* becauſe ſpeaking for, and by Direction of *Moſes*; and others, even Chriſt Himſelf, as ſpeaking in the ace and Stead of God; then the Word *Prophet*, by the *Greek*, means *one that ſpeaks by Inſpiration, or Revelation from God*; and how does this diſagree, with the *Hebrew Nabi*, *one to whom God revealeth ſomewhat*? Only in this, that the *Hebrew* Word expreſſes the Prophet, in his paſſive Relation, wherein he receiveth a Revelation from God; the *Greek* in his active, wherein he yields himſelf, inſtrumentally to utter it to Men.

§ 10. Seeing then that the *Greek* Word, προφητης, *Prophet*, may mean as well in general, *to ſpeak any thing by Inſpiration*, as in particular *to foretell*, we appeal to the New Teſtament's Uſe of that Word, for there the *Greek* is the Original, as the *Hebrew* of the Old: And if in the Chriſtian Diſpenſation *Prophecying* be throughout the New Teſtament, not at all limited to the Particular of Prediction, but taken at large for ſpeaking by the Holy Spirit; then it's altogether unwarrantable for Chriſtians, to limit the Senſe of the Word to Divination or Prognoſticating. How it came to paſs, or why they have in this particular, limited the Word of God touching *Prophecy*, as well as in others, may peradventure hereafter be hinted at: But for the preſent, to take it for confeſs'd, that a Prophet is one to whom God reveals ſomewhat, and he utters it to the World, we now purſue the Thread of this Diſcourſe: And having already enquir'd into the Scripture-Diſcoveries, touching the Ways of God revealing Himſelf, by the *Apparition of Angels*, and by *Dreams*, and by *Voice* heard, and by *Viſions*; and having briefly noted ſome more extraordinary Operations of the Holy Spirit, we go on to treat of INSPIRATION PROPHETICK.

§ 11. When we mention Inſpiration to propheſy, or to utter for the Benefit of the exiſting Church, what God revealeth and ſendeth a Man to do, it is manifeſt, that this is quite a different Thing, from the ſanctifying Influence of the Holy Spirit on the Heart: This latter indeed may be call'd Inſpiration, and our Saviour bids his Diſciples *rejoice, that their Names were written in Heaven,* much rather than becauſe Devils were ſubject to them: And ſurely that Priviledge which inveſts a Man with the high Honour of calling upon God, as *his Father*, is much more comfortable for himſelf, than to be his Meſſenger. But my Purpoſe being wholly to limit my ſelf to the Ways of God extraordinary, in revealing Himſelf; and by what has been ſaid already, it appearing, that he to whomſoever, the arbitrary uncontrollable Chooſer of his own Inſtruments, does ſo vouchſafe to communicate Himſelf any Way, whether by *Angelick Appearances*, or by *Dreams, Voices, Viſions*, or once by any one of them, may rightly be ſtiled a Prophet, in the larger Senſe of that Word; yet, in the ſtricter and more proper Senſe of the Word, a Prophet is only that Perſon, who is actuated and carry'd by the Spirit to ſpeak openly for the Benefit of the exiſtent Church or Generation; the Manner whereof, and how this extraordinary Commiſſion appear'd, it remains now to treat of, upon the Scripture-Foot only, and the Diſcoveries it gives us of that Matter.

§ 12. If *Noah* be honoured by God with the Title of a *Preacher of Righteouſneſs* to the old World, for his aſſiduous Work of Faith, in Obedience to a Divine Command, immediately given to himſelf, wherein he was the laſt Monitor, the World that periſhed, had; *Abraham* may well be accounted *a Preacher of Righteouſneſs* by Faith, to the New World, ſeeing he was the firſt of it, that believed, and reſted upon God revealing; and therein is ſet forth a Pattern to all Ages, of that *Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*: Therefore it cannot well be queſtion'd, but he comes within the Definition of a Prophet, whoſe proper Office is to divulge to the World, what he receives by Revelation from God: And we being now to enquire into the Ways of the Prophetick Spirit, That which we ſhall firſt inſiſt on, is the Trance: And accordingly, the Manner wherein this Father of Nations (ſpiritually, much more than literally,) receiv'd thoſe Manifeſtations, from the original Father of Light, is deſcribed

ſcribed to us, *Gen.* xv. 12. to be under *a deep Sleep*, [*Greek*, Extacy,] *and an Horror of great Darkneſs falling upon him:* Upon which Text (as *H. Ainſworth* notes) the *Hebrew* Doctors affirm, "That before a Prophetical Viſion, a deep "Sleep fell upon them, and all that propheſied, their "Joints trembled, there remained no Strength in them, "their Thoughts were troubled, (or interrupted,) and the "Mind was left changed."

§ 13. *Balaam* before that noble Prophecy of his was utter'd, [*Heb. fell down*] which we render, *Numb.* xxiv. 4. *fell into a Trance.* And this was no Objection valid enough, to render dubious, the Affirmation of the Text, that it was the Spirit of God that came ſo upon him; for nothing in this Caſe attended him, but what equally accompany'd the holy Men of God, as will be found here under by multiplied Examples. However, becauſe ſome are offended, to have him ranked among them, I ſhall here add, to what has been already ſaid upon it, under the Head of Viſions, that the *Greek* peculiarly calls him *a true Man*, that is, one affected by the true Spirit of Prophecy: And becauſe moſt are at this Day ſtartled, at the Mention of Extacy, upon the Influence of the good Spirit, I ſhall be the more particular here under in citing, what the critically Learned in the Text, upon this Subject do remark. Wherefore to begin with the Caſe of *Balaam*, *Pool's Synopſis* acquaints us, "That when "he fell upon his Face to the Ground, it was from Ina-"bility to bear up under the Spirit of God: And it was "the uſual Condition of Men, to fall down, or flat on "the Ground, when the Spirit of Prophecy deſcended up-"on them: For thus it was with *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Saul*, "and St. *John*. Thus was *Balaam* ſurprized with Extacy, "and deprived of his Senſes; for thoſe that are under the "*Afflatus*, or Inſpiration, either of *a good or an evil Spirit*, do "ſuffer the temporary Loſs of their Senſes."

§ 14. When King *Saul* ſent Meſſengers three Times, to apprehend *David*, 1 *Sam.* xix. 20--24. *the Spirit of God came upon them, and they propheſied alſo, when they ſaw the Company of Prophets, before Samuel propheſying*; and *Saul* himſelf when he came among them, had the Spirit of God upon him: Wherein it is plain from the Drift of the Story, that by the Spirit of God upon them, they were all deprived of Strength, to execute their Purpoſe, and *ſo far* their Reaſon and Senſes were ſuperſeeded. But to expreſs it with

the Men of Study; " They were from above enforced to " lay aſide their military Garments at leaſt, and to act " the Prophet. And perhaps, *to propheſie* in this Place " means, to talk at Random, and dance naked, as the " Worſhippers of *Bacchus* uſed to do; whilſt *Samuel* and " the Prophets praiſed God in their Raptures: But this " is certain, that they, forgetting their impious Purpoſe, " hereby God manifeſted his Power, miraculouſly to reſcue " *David*, It might be, however, that *Saul*, in his Extacy " did magnify the Lord; for the Gift of Prophecying is " ſometimes given to the wicked. Thus when he *fell down* " naked on the Ground, it was but as others, who were *ta-* " *ken with, and poſſeſſed by* that Divine Spirit; for in ſuch " Caſe, the exterior Senſes did not perform their Offices. " It's true, he flung off all his Clothes, and nothing ought " to be accounted ſhameful, that appertains to the cele- " brating Divine Praiſes. When the Prophets were im- " preſſed by the Spirit of God, they often loſt their Sen- " ſes, and therefore (no Wonder) the Senſe of Shame: " And thus they flung off their Clothes, and lay proſtrate " on the Earth: And as *Saul* lay ſo, all that Day, and " all that Night, it was becauſe he was deprived of " Strength and Senſe to ariſe; whereby *David* had Time to " make his Eſcape; upon which Account, the Proverb, *Is* " *Saul alſo among the Prophets?* was hereon built, to expreſs " any wonderful Deliverance, or Interpoſal of God, be- " yond all Manner of human Expectations."

§ 15. Next to the Loſs of all Senſe, and the being as a dead Corpſe, nothing more ſhews the Superincidence and maſterly Agency of a Spirit on the Prophets, than what we find in Scripture of the Local removing of their Bodies. For what befell *Elias* in his actual Tranſlation up to Heaven at length, is intimated to us by *Obadiah*, and the Sons of the Prophets at *Jericho*, to have been tranſacted on him, in ſome Removals or Tranſportations, at other Times, 1 *Kings* xviii. 12. ii. 16. And what the undoubted Spirit of the Lord did to him, the ſame was moſt expreſly done to *Philip*, *Acts* viii. 39. as even the evil One is thought to be permitted to do, to our Lord Himſelf, *Mat.* iv. 1---5. And what befell St. *John* and *Ezekiel*, when they mention the Spirit's ſnatching them up, and carrying them away, is very difficult to reſolve, whether it were not a Bodily Removal, as well as the preceding ones. But when theſe Inſtances are brought, of the ſtrong Agency of the

the Spirit on the Prophet, it ought not to be omitted, that there are many *Degrees* in that Agency, as that of *Iſaiah* plainly hints, ſaying, *Chap.* viii. 11. *The Lord ſpake unto me with a ſtrong Hand*; for *the Hand of the Lord was upon me*, is a Phraſe uſed ſeveral Times by *Ezekiel* and others, to expreſs the Spirit of Prophecy then incumbent on them, which in its Operation, may be more or leſs ſtrong. And thus probably it was ſometimes with *David*; for the *Greek* puts the Title of *A Pſalm upon an Extacy* on the 31ſt; and what we render at the latter End thereof, *I ſaid in my Haſte*, is by the *Greek*, *Vulg. Lat.* and others, *I ſaid in my Extacy*.

§ 16. As to thoſe ſtrong Impreſſions of the Hand of the Lord, they occur frequently in *Ezekiel*: For, when upon beholding *the Appearance of the Likeneſs of the Glory of the Lord*, he was fallen upon his Face, *Ezek.* ii. 2. The Spirit (or Angel) entring into him, ſet him up upon his Feet; that is, reſtored him from that Diſability of Strength, which had occaſion'd his Fall to the Ground. Juſt the ſame Expreſſions for his falling and Recovery, are found alſo in the next Chapter: Much like to theſe, are repeated again in the 37th, 43d, and 44th Chapters. But I paſs theſe over, becauſe that of *Daniel* is more expreſs; for ſays he, *Dan.* viii. 17, 18, 27. *When* Gabriel *came near unto me where I ſtood, I was afraid, and fell upon my Face; and when he ſpake to me, I was in a deep Sleep on my Face toward the Ground, but he touched me, and ſet me upright; nevertheleſs, after the Viſion, I fainted, and was ſick certain Days.* Now, " Whereas (ſay the Commentators) the Diſturbance " of his Mind, was ſo vehement, that it made him lan- " guiſh and fall ſick, we are not thereby to underſtand it, " as naturally befalling; but that God impreſſed ſuch " Terror on him, that he might not be lifted up by his " Viſions, and alſo to the End he might know this parti- " cular one to be divine: And as to the Fear he deſcribes, " it aroſe from the Majeſty, wherewith God inveſted the " Nature of an Angel, in his Delegation unto Men; and " as the Angel beſpoke *Daniel*, under the Compellation " of, *Son of Man*, (as they did often to *Ezekiel*) this was " to put him in Mind of his Condition, in Fleſh and " Blood, leſt he ſhould be exalted, with ſuch Heavenly " Sights; and that he might duly conſider the Diſtinction " between himſelf and thoſe Angelick Spirits, he conver- " ſed withal. At the ſame Time alſo, the Compellation,

" *Son of Man,* has ſomething of Friendlineſs in it, and " ſhews in this, and *Ezekiel*'s Caſe, that by touching and " lifting up a frail Mortal, they are affected with Com- " paſſion, to the Weakneſs of mouldring Fleſh."

§ 17. But becauſe Men have drawn ſuch falſe Ideas of the Spirit of God on the Prophet; as if any Bodily Hurt from it, were inconſiſtent with the Operation of ſo gracious a Being, I ſhall here barely recite, what concerns the ſame in *Iſaiah* and *Habakkuk*. *A grievous Viſion is declared unto me,* (ſays the former) *therefore are my Loins filled with Pain; Pangs have taken hold upon me, even like the Pangs of a Woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at hearing of it; I was diſmayed at the ſeeing of it; my Heart panted; Fearfulneſs affrighted me; the Night of my Pleaſure hath he turned into Fear unto me. When I heard* (ſays the latter) *my Belly trembled, my Lips quiver'd at the Voice, Rottenneſs enter'd into my Bones, and I trembled in my ſelf.* So that what hapned to *Belſhazzar* in his Cups, tho' in him it be repreſented as judicial, that, when he ſaw the Hand which was writing on the Wall, (which was a Viſion to him) *his Countenance was changed, and his Thoughts troubled him, ſo that the Joints of his Loins were looſed, and his Knees ſmote one againſt another:* Even all this to *Belſhazzar,* was no more than befell the *Man of Deſires,* the greatly beloved *Daniel* himſelf, *Dan.* v. 6. x. 8--11. for ſays he, *I ſtood trembling, neither was there Breath left in me;* (nay, at the firſt) *there remained no Strength in me; my Vigour was turned into Corruption, and I fell* (was flung) *on my Face upon the Ground:* In which Text the Words in the Original are ſo emphatical, that thoſe that beſt underſtand them, give us the Import of them to be, " That he was almoſt without " Life; all Strength to ſupport the Body, was taken from " his Nerves; all his Senſes external and internal, were " ſuppreſſed; and in the Place of a vigorous, and flouriſh- " ing State of Health which he enjoyed before, an uni- " verſal Decay and Deſtitution of Spirits, ſeized the whole " Body."

§ 18. But, ſay the Lovers of themſelves, the Spirit in the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, never ſhew'd it ſelf in any of theſe Ways of Terror. Let us therefore examine, whether the Wiſdom of God may not herein alſo differ from ours, which commonly ſavours of Fleſh; for we have ſeen already, that the great Effuſion of the Spirit at *Pente-*

coſt,

coſt, was emblem'd and attended with the Noiſe, as of a roaring ratling Wind, than which ſcarce any Thing in Nature, is more full of Terror; and ſome of the Antients (I think in particular St. *Cyprian*) ſay, That this tempeſtuous one did nearly imitate the affrighting Sounds at Mount *Sinai*, that made all the People in the Camp to tremble. But, whether that Tradition in the firſt Ages, were well founded or not, it is certain from the plain and obvious Senſe of the Word written, that the Sound there expreſſed, muſt needs fill the Minds of them that heard it, with much Fear. And this is not the ſole Inſtance of that kind, attending the extraordinary Manifeſtations of God, in the New Teſtament to the Prophets: For when *Peter*, *James* and *John* were with our Lord on the Mount, and there came a Cloud which overſhadowed them, *they feared as they enter'd into the Cloud*, inſomuch that *Peter* (poſſibly thro' the Affrightment) knew not what he ſaid; then, there came a Voice out of that Cloud, which when the Diſciples heard, *they fell on their Face, and were ſore afraid, and Jeſus came and touched them, ſaying, Ariſe, be not afraid*, *Mat.* xvii. 6, 7. Touching the full Import of which Text, I refer my ſelf again, to what is given us as the Senſe of the Body of the moſt Learned: "Here was Affrightment (ſay they) ſuch as the Women found at the Sepulchre, on the Sight of an Angel, *Mark* xvi. 5. or rather a ſudden Deprivation of all Senſe and Feeling, as in *Dan.* viii. 17. which Place does clearly explain this: Nor can the Context well bear any other Interpretation; for the Apoſtles are here ſo ſtruck, and diſturbed in the State of their Mind, that as *Mark*, and *Luke* inform us, they neither ſpoke or acted any Thing, with a ſober Judgment: As therefore a ſudden darting of Light caſts down our Eyes to the Earth, it is no Wonder, if a greater Conſternation, flings alſo our Bodies on the Ground; for thoſe that are loaded with the Weight of a Body, cannot enter into a full Converſe with God." Wherefore, we ſee from hence, what Condition the Apoſtles were under, when Chriſt touched them, and ſaid, *Ariſe, be not afraid*; even as the Angel did to *Daniel*, in the parallel Caſe herein alluded to. And they are both equally Inſtances, of the State of Extacy, that it is a being deprived of the Senſes.

§ 19. But tho' Men have heedleſly overlooked ſo long, the Operations of the Holy Spirit in the New Teſtament,

on this Head of Extacy, (accompanying extraordinary divine Manifeſtations,) the Text however of it, is not ſo barren, that we need build upon the aboveſaid Caſe alone; for when St. *John was in the the Spirit on the Lord's Day*, *Rev.* i. 10. and ſaw that glorious Angel and Viſion, he *fell at his Feet as dead*; the Circumſtance *falling down* as dead, anſwers to that of the three Apoſtles falling on their Face, and of *Daniel* (with others) on the like Occaſion, more than once: But for the other Term, uſed by St. *John*, of his *being in the Spirit*, leſt I ſhould be thought to give my private Interpretation, let us leave the more Intelligent in Scripture-Phraſe, to expound it: "*I was in the Spirit* (ſay "they) is a Phraſe, which occurs ſeveral Times in the "*Apocalyps*, and ſignifies, that what he ſaw, was not with "the Corporeal Eye; but in an Extacy, or State, where-"in he was out of himſelf, and underſtood nothing by "the Perception of his Senſes, or of his Mind; but the "Faculties of the Mind being rapt or taken away, he was "*in the Spirit*, as it ſtands in Oppoſition to *his being in the* "*Uſe of them*: This is the Definition of a Rapture by the "Spirit, and of one inſpired with ſacred *Enthuſiaſm*; as the "*Greeks* uſe the ſame Expreſſion, *in the Muſes*, for one un-"der a Rapture by them: And in like manner, as the "Phraſe (ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ,) *in the evil Spirit*, is uſed, "*Mark* i. 23. v. 2. to expreſs thoſe that were poſſeſſed of "the Devil: So that St. *John* ſays the ſame in other "Words, as *Ezekiel* in thoſe, *The Hand of the Lord was up-*"*on me*. Wherefore the Apoſtle diſcern'd and conceiv'd, "Spiritual Forms and Things, after a Manner ſo ſpiritu-"al, as the Senſe and Reaſon of Man, by their proper "Powers, can never ariſe unto."

§ 20. By Agreement with the Expreſſion in thoſe Texts of *Mark* of being *in the unclean Spirit*, and thoſe of St. *John*'s being *in the holy Spirit*; the ſame Annotators tell us, that Paſſage of 2 *Cor.* xii. 2. *I knew a Man in Chriſt*, is to be underſtood of one, under Rapture *in the Spirit of Chriſt*, *who was* rapt or *caught up to the third Heaven*, *whether in the Body or out of the Body*, the ſame Man, under that Enthuſiaſm, could *not tell*. Here, then, we have a third Proof from the New Teſtament, of what *Iſaiah* ſeems to refer to, in ſaying, *the Hand of the Lord was ſtrong upon him*: And becauſe St. *Paul* twice recites, that he was rapt or *caught up*, as if ſome Streſs more than common ought to be laid on thoſe Words, we ſet before the Reader the In-

terpretation

terpretation thereof, by the Gentlemen ſo often in this Treatiſe cited; "*Rapt or caught up*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 2. (ſay "they) means commonly an Extacy, or Deprivation of "the Mind ſo far, as that nothing is perceived by the Sen- "ſes, or Intellect, except what at that Time, is preſented "to them, from Heaven: But this of St. *Paul*, is of a "far greater Kind; for he remained not in the ſame Place, "but from Earth was ſo caught into Paradice, that he "confeſſes, he knew not, whether his Soul went out of "it, or the Body went alſo along with That: Wherefore, "in this Rapture, he ſeems to have heard, or apprehen- "ded thoſe unſpeakable Words mention'd, after the Man- "that Spirits ſeparate from the Body, do; whence we may "well gather, the Greatneſs of the Revelation, in th a tthe "Apoſtle himſelf knew not the Manner of it."

§ 21. The Word *ENTHUSIASM* uſed in ſeveral foregoing Paragraphs, is a *Greek* Word adapted into moſt other Languages, which in its original Derivation ſignifies the *being actuated of God*, as the ſame ſtands oppoſed to the *being acted by Reaſon and the Senſes* only. Wherefore, in the full Latitude of the Word, all the Children of Faith, who are acted by the Principles of Revelation, and thereby embrace Things that are above the Dictates of Reaſon, and even its Comprehenſion, are properly ſo far within the Term of *Enthuſiaſts*. But as we are limited in this Treatiſe, to the Subject of Prophetick Revelation, Inſpiration, or Enthuſiaſm, our ſole Buſineſs is to enquire into what is Scriptural, and warranted by the Authority of the ſacred Records: In the Purſuit of which Enquiry, the foregoing Paragraph has acquainted us, that even in Raptures or Extacies, there are various Degrees, wherein that of St. *Paul* laſt mention'd, did far exceed the common Sort of them: And as I am fully ſatisfied in the Truth of that Obſervation; ſo I believe the Trance or Extacy which the ſame Apoſtle fell into, *Acts* xxii. 17. whilſt he was praying in the Temple, was of that common ſort, becauſe therein he interchanged Diſcourſe with the Appearance in Viſion before him: Whereas, in the other, all the Account we have, is, that he heard *unſpeakable Words*. And even in thoſe great Degrees of Extacy, wherein St. *John*, *Daniel* and others, fell at the firſt to the Ground as dead, the Angelick or Divine Power that ſtruck them down, ſoon relaxed the Weight of that Hand of the Lord upon them. Wherefore, under the ſame Act of ſuperſeeding the Exerciſe of

the

the Rational Mind and Senſes, there ſeems to have been a different Degree of that Suppreſſion alſo, before they wholly came to themſelves.

§ 22. When *Saul* was travelling on the Road to *Damaſcus*, the Light ſtreaming from Heaven, made him *fall* to the Earth, and took away his ſight, which was plainly due to the ſupernatural Cauſe then appearing; even as the falling of *Daniel*, *Ezekiel*, and the three Apoſtles, on a like Occaſion: But that which cauſed his falling to the Earth did not take away his Senſes, or at leaſt, ſoon left upon him only ſome trembling and Aſtoniſhment, *Acts* ix. 4, 6. In like Manner *Peter*, when the Angel of the Lord came upon him in Sleep, and with a Stroke on the Side raiſed him up, he knew not what was done upon himſelf, all the while; until the Angel left him, *Acts* xii. 9, 11. and then 'tis ſaid, he came to himſelf; which plainly ſhews, that he was not entirely *compos mentis* before, tho' he had both Strength and Underſtanding to put on his Clothes, to walk along, and to know the Places he paſſed thro'. Thus alſo, when *Peter* fell into a Trance or Extacy, *Acts* x. 10. wherein he ſaw the Sheet full of living Creatures, unclean by the Law, and unlawful to eat, there was ſo much of the *Man* left, that in Anſwer to the Angelick Voice, he pleaded his own Prejudices, three Times ſucceſſively: Wherefore, by the Circumſtances of this Revelation, joined with the two preceeding, we may conclude, That tho' a Man be not himſelf wholly, either in his Bodily Senſes, or Reaſon, under the Impreſſions that attend, a Divine Preſence or Influence; yet an Extacy or Trance, do not always imply a total Suppreſſion of them, as in ſome Caſes above, we have found it to contain.

§ 23. Wherefore, tho' the Trance be a moral Evidence of the Superintendence of a Spirit, yet we are ready to confeſs, that it can be no Demonſtration thereof; becauſe there are Trances natural, or what does ſo nearly approach them, that they take off from it, the very Conſtituent of a demonſtrative Proof, to the Beholders, at the leaſt, unleſs they be very skilful in the Symptoms of Diſeaſe. Neither do I know, how the Nature of a Spiritual Agency does ſtrictly admit of Demonſtration, except to the Perſon himſelf; and to him, it may very well, and undoubtedly does, take the Place of ſuch. But deſiring to be excuſed from Philoſophizing upon the utmoſt Bounds of the Natural, and thoſe

that commence the Denomination of Supernatural Things; and peradventure it would be happier, and wiſer for all Men ſo to do, unleſs they could critically ſet forth the Limitations that diſtinguiſh them; I ſhall content my ſelf, with what my Saviour ſeems to have laid, the greateſt Streſs upon, *It is written*, and *how read you*, and *ſearch the Scripture*, and be determined by the moſt obvious Senſe thereof. And as nothing in thoſe ſacred Records is written in vain, but all for our Inſtruction and Comfort; the very Pages of them upon this Subject, which are commonly paſſed over without Notice, do afford, upon ſuitable Occaſions a Treaſure to the true Believer, more precious than that of Gold, and all the Riches of the *Eaſt* and *Weſt* together. Upon the Report of theſe, therefore, I proceed further to ſearch after the Knowledge of God, in thoſe Ways that his ſupream Wiſdom has choſen, whereby to manifeſt Himſelf to the Children of Men.

§ 24. *Secondly*, Therefore as there is a Conſtellation of many Glories, diſcover'd to the Eye of Man as may be obſerved in the preceeding Inſtance, under that deſpicable Way of Enthuſiaſm, *the Trance*, which the moſt piercing, natural Eye could never have reached; the Moral Proof of a Spirit's Superincidence and reſiding on the Prophet, is further made good to us, by another Method of His, whoſe Steps, are often in great Meaſure, untraceable and unaccountable to thoſe, who reſolve to reſt always upon their Standing REASON: And poſſibly, in no other Particular, are they more plunged out of their Depth, than when they would go about to Fathom his Proceedings, in that Way of his ſpeaking unto Men, by figurative Signs, on the Prophet's Perſon. But ſeeing that an Enquiry into the State of the Meſſengers He ſends, and thro' whom He has ſpoken as thro' a Trumpet, would be imperfect without inſerting this remarkable Circumſtance, occurring on them; I ſhall need, among the entire Believers of his Word, no more Apology for inſiſting on it, than that, *it is Written*; tho' indeed there is an Advantage to Revelation in general, redounding (as I conceive) even from theſe (ſometimes ridiculous) Signs, in that, they afford a juſt preſumptive Evidence, that it was a ſupernatural coercive Power of the Spirit, which did force the Prophet, againſt his natural Will, to ſubmit to them; and thereby, in the Chain of natural Conſequences, they yeild us one Link more of Proof, againſt the Prophane *Sadducee*; and ſerve

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to evince, that Revelation came not, by the Will or ſubtil Contrivance of Men, but was derived to us, from a ſuperior Authority, even in ſome Senſe againſt the Will, and always over-ruling the Inclination of the Inſtrument in it.

§ 25. But that, what I have above repreſented (as to figurative Signs on the Perſon of the Prophet) was in earneſt the true State of the Matter; that is, that the Uſe of them, was from the uncontrollable Power of the Spirit on him, and againſt his Will wrought upon him by it, I conceive does fully appear, from the Complaints, we find him uttering on that Account. Thus *Ezekiel*, who moſt of all the Prophets by far, was made ſubſervient to the Will of God in this Way of ſpeaking to Men, (as we ſhall briefly ſhew by-and-by) cries out, *Ezek.* xx. 49. *Ah Lord God, they ſay of me, doth he not ſpeak Parrables?* Which, if we will take the more literate Comentators Senſe of the Words, the Prophet therein repreſents the People ſpeaking of him, thus, "This Fellow is mad, therefore he ſpeaks Parables which "have neither Senſe, nor any Coherence in them; whereas "then ſays he, I have hitherto *Propheſied by Signs*, and in "that Manner to them, that according to the Opinion of "Men, I am already judged little better, than one per-"fectly diſtracted; if I now add the Uſe of parabolical "and obſcure Expreſſions, ſhall I not be concluded in ear-"neſt, to be a Perſon altogether out of my Senſes, and "raving? *Wherefore, O Lord, why doſt thou command me to "ſpeak to them, after ſo dark a Manner? I beſeech thee, O "Lord, ſeeing it is ſo grievous to them, let me ſpeak more plain-"ly:* So that in the whole, the Complaint of the Prophet "ſeems to import, that not only, the Matter, and Argu-"ment of his Propheſying, was obſcurely expreſſed; but "the Form and Manner thereof, expoſed him to the Scoffs "of the People."

§ 26. The noble Prophet *Iſaiah* who ſhew'd reluctancy at his firſt Commiſſionating, having two Sons given him, does by Divine Appointment, call them by uncouth Names, for a Sign to *Iſrael*; and he himſelf muſt bow down in Obedience to the Heavenly Voice, and be content to walk naked, without ſo much as a Shoe, for three Years Time together, to ſet forth by a lively Sign, after what an ignominious Manner the *Ægpptians* ſhould be led into Slavery, by the *Aſſyrian*. But in all this, ſay the Learned, "he ſufficiently

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" expreſſes, *Iſa.* viii. 18. that it was from the Lord, and " in Submiſſion to his good Pleaſure, that himſelf and " Children were expoſed for *Signs and Wonders in Iſrael*; " ſupporting himſelf with the ſaid ſole Conſideration, un- " der the Scoffs of the prophane Multitude, who, by the " Word *WONDER*, are intimated to count him a Mon- " ſter, and ſtrange phantaſtical Fellow, pointing with De- " riſion after him, and his Son *Maher-ſhalal-haſh-baz*; for as few, or none believed his Report, in the Predictions ſignified by theſe Signs, they muſt needs look upon him, as a Scare-crow, and common Laughing-Stock, for them. And there ſeems ſomething alſo of like ſcorn, upon the royal Prophet, when in the Complaint of his ill Treatment, by the wicked; he cries out, *I am as a Wonder unto many, but thou art my ſtrong Refuge, Pſal.* lxxi. 7.

§ 27. The falſe Prophets ran without being ſent of God, and as they could promiſe themſelves no better Wages, they made ſure of the Wind and Tide of the World's Approbation, the Prieſt and the People flocked after them, and ſo all went well on their Side: Wherefore, if there be any Weight in the Apoſtles Argument, 1 *Cor.* ix. 16--18. that a Diſpenſation of the Goſpel was evidently committed to him, becauſe he did it not of his own Will, but from a Neceſſity laid upon him, and a Woe impending, if he yielded not to it; then the like Argument, is never ſtronger, for the Proof of a Man's being true, in the prophetick Miſſion; than when he is driven by an impelling Neceſſity, to ſuch odd Feats, as unavoidably draw upon him the Odium and Contempt, of all Mankind: And ſurely, there was even upon the Apoſtles, ſomewhat, that filled up the Words of their being a Spectacle to the World, and as the Off-ſcouring, or (common Jakes) of all Things. But as to the Point of Shame and Contempt (the moſt touching and pungent Trial, to ingenious Minds) I ſee nothing, pertinent to the Prophetick Call, that more neceſſarily involved them under it, than this of their being made figurative Signs, of what God ſpake by them: And yet by ſome Paſſages of Scripture, one may be almoſt induced to queſtion, whether the ſame were not inſeparable from the Spirit of Prophecy; for thus the *Pſalmiſt* expreſſes it, *Pſal.* lxxiv 9. *We ſee not our Signs; there is no more any Prophet*; as if Signs did always accompany the Propher, and the Latter was not without the Former: And again, in *Hoſea* xii. 10. *I am the Lord thy God, from the Land of Egypt, I have alſo ſpo-*

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ken by [*Hebr.* upon] *the Prophets, and I have multiply'd Viſions, and uſed* [*Hebr.* or will uſe] *Similitudes, by the Miniſtry of the Prophets*; on which Paſſage the accurate Explainers of the Word, *Similitudes*, give us the Senſe of it to be, " that God " was ſhadowed forth and repreſented, not by the Words " only but by the Actions of Prophets; for the Prophets did " a great many things in the People's View, which had reſpect " to the Perſon of God; and therein they repreſented Him " perſonally; wherefore this Text does not inſiſt, upon the " ſubject Matter of Prophecy, but the Way and Manner, " whereby God did manifeſt Himſelf by the Prophets."

§ 28. Beſides theſe Texts, which afford room for Queſtion, whether the Manner of God's ſpeaking by Signs, upon the Perſons of Prophets, were not general, to all; that moſt notable Diſcrimination, between the Manner, wherein He would ſpeak to *Moſes*, and that which He would uſe to all other Prophets, is given us, *Numb.* xii. 8. to be, to *Moſes*, *apparently*, to others, in *dark Speeches*. By this Deſcription of the Manner, He would uſe to all other Prophets, the Way of Figurative Signs on them, may well be included, but not upon any good Ground (as I conceive) excluded. However, leaving that Matter to remain queſtionable, thus much is beyond it, That the Uſe of Signs upon the Perſon of the Prophet, whereby God ſhadowed out Himſelf by Facts done, and ſet before the Eye of the Spectators, as well as ſpake to them by Words, is ſo multiplied by the expreſs Recital of the Text; that no one acquainted with the written Word, can, or ought to think, that the Appearance of ſuch, or the like to ſuch, as the ſacred Record ſets before us, is any ways unworthy of the High and Mighty Lord of Heaven and Earth, to expreſs Himſelf by. For if the Divine Original of that Scripture Revelation we have eſpouſed and embraced with all our Soul, be very ſtrongly provable againſt the Deiſt, by the Tenour of its Contrariety to all human Pride, (as well as other turpid Paſſions) and its Freedom from Artifice and cunningly deviſed Fable; what is there that comes with more Weight into this Scale, than what follows, in this Relation given us therein of Prophetical Signs?

§ 29. The ſuffering of *Iſaiah* above-mention'd, in walking naked, is parallel'd in another Kind, by that of the compaſſionable Prophet; who, in Order to ſet before King *Ahab*, a Figure of his denounced ignominious Death, ſolicitouſly

licitouſly gets himſelf wounded; and then being beſmeared with Blood and Aſhes, 1 *Kings* xx. 37--43. delivers the Meſſage, he was from above, entruſted with. An Action certainly this was, not only in it ſelf, ſimply conſider'd, difficult for Fleſh and Blood, to ſubmit to, and expoſing to the King's Reſentment. But (what to us at this diſtant View) may ſeem to have rendred the Word of the Lord commanding it; to be Matter of Suſpicion; becauſe the very Fact of wounding, came within the Prohibition of the Law, *Lev.* xxiv. 19, 20. And if in that Age, the People were poſſeſſed with any ſuch Suggeſtion, the moſt pungent by far of all this poor Man's Sufferings, muſt ariſe to him on that Account; for to be eſteem'd a Tranſgreſſor of the Law, on the very Account of a Man's Obedience to the Lawgiver, is a ſort of Trial ſo heavy, that no one can be ſuppoſed to lie under a greater. But of this, we ſhall ſee more in the Marriage of *Hoſea*, commanded by the firſt Beginning of the Word of the Lord in him, ſaying, *Go, take unto thee a Wife of Whoredoms, and Children of Whoredoms, for the Land hath committed great Whoredom, departing from the Lord.* After which Marriage performed, *Gomer the Daughter of Diblaim* conceives, and bares him a Son, who is named of the Lord, and a Prophecy built upon that Name: All which Circumſtances are ſpecified again on the Birth, ſeverally, of two other Children, after weaning of each of them precedently: And all theſe Things are given out to be ſignificant of the Tenour of his Prophecying, as may be read at large in the firſt and Second Chapters: And perhaps, the moſt expreſſive Promiſes of Graciouſneſs to his Church in all the Word of God, may therein be found built upon that Sign.

§ 30. The Explication of the Difficulties moſt offenſive in the foregoing Paragraph, I leave upon the Authority of the Criticks, ſo often cited; "*Iſaiah*'s going naked (ſays "Mr. *Calvin*) was not more indecent, than the Tranſactiⁿ "on of circumciſing a grown Man (which among prophane "People might ſeem a very ridiculous Thing,) therefore "the Prophet *Iſaiah*'s Obedience in this Point, was highly "commendable. As to the Caſe of *Hoſea*, (ſay others) to "take unto himſelf, a Wife and Children of Whoredoms, "might well ſeem a ſcandalous Act, becauſe the marryⁱⁿ "ing of a Whore, was forbidden to the Prieſts, *Lev.* "xxi. 7. But whatſoever God commandeth extraordinaⁿ "rily, That Thing by Virtue of the very Command, is

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" rendred comely. An Adultereſs by the Law, is to be " put to Death, *Levit.* xx. 10. *Deut.* xxii. 22. and a Ba- " ſtard to be excluded the Congregation, unto the Tenth " Generation, *Deut.* xxiii. 2. If therefore *Hoſea* had by his " own Will, taken home, and cheriſhed ſuch a Woman and " Children, he had, doubtleſs, violated the Divine Law: " But as God commanded it extraordinarily, the Things " otherwiſe unjuſt and ſinfull, did become to him, both " lawful and ſeemly: Thus then, the Marriage of *Hoſea* " was juſt, in Order to ſhadow forth, by a Sign the A- " dultery of that People, who had been eſpouſed unto God, " as their proper Husband." Wherefore, by theſe Concluſions, the Lawfulneſs of Facts ſeems to be terminated by the right Definition of what is voluntary and involuntary. Now in all other Perſons whatſoever, becauſe all Action implies it to be voluntary, whatever is contrary to the ſtanding revealed Will of God, becomes ſinful; it being an Original Law incumbent on the Creature, that his Will ſhould be in all things confined, by that of his Creator's: But in the Caſe of a Prophet, who by the very conſtituted Definition of his State, is not ſuppoſable to ſpeak and act, in his Prophetick Relation, by the Dictate of his own Will; the ſame Action that muſt be voluntary in others, is not ſo in him, becauſe his perſonal Will is always over-ruled and ſuperſeeded, by the uncontrollable Agency upon him: And that this is, the true State of the Matter, I think will appear, by the following Inſtances, wherein we have an Account, from the Prophets themſelves, of their repreſenting God ſpeaking by Signs, exhibited on their Perſons.

§ 31. For Example then; who can rationally ſuppoſe, that *Jeremiah*, *Chap.* xxvii. was led by his own Will, to put a Tyre of half a Dozen wooden Yokes, upon his Neck; and then to make the uneaſy Complement of one of them, to each of the foreign Ambaſſadors, reſiding at that Time, in *Jeruſalem*, with the inſolent Command, to ſend them, ſeverally, to their Maſters? And afterwards what a Spectacle muſt it be, to wear one of them a conſiderable time about his own Neck, that he might repreſent to the *Jewiſh* People, the Condition of Slavery, juſt falling upon his own Native Conntry? I am perſwaded the moſt ſtaring Deiſt of our Age, with all his Sarcaſm, muſt, and would drop his darling Topick of Prieſt-craft, in ſuch a Caſe as this; and not only in this, but even in the Caſe of the more common Functions

Functions of a Prophet, his Raillery upon the Head of Intrigue and Artifice to eſtaliſh Reveal'd Religion, would ſoon be dampt; for what Scoffer is there ſo ſenſeleſs, but would readily believe *Jeremiah*, Chap. xvii. 16. where he ſays, *I did not haſten* (as falſe Prophets are ſaid to do) *from being a Paſtor, to ſerve God as a Prophet, nor did I deſire that woful Day*: But upon the Acceptance of his Call, ſince the venerable Order of Prieſthood could not skreen him, from being in Deriſion daily, and every one mocking him, we may further believe him alſo, *Chap.* xx. that he was ready to ſay, *I will not make mention of it, nor ſpeak any more in this Name*; and ſince few or none there are, but who would believe him in the foregoing Clauſes, why not alſo in what is ſubjoined? *The Word of the Lord* (commiſſionating) *was in mine Heart as a burning Fire, ſhut up in my Bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay.* But alas! alas! few did believe him here: His own Fraternity of the Prieſthood might readily own, he was a Man indeed, in ſome Things might be acquitted of much cunning; but then, ſay they, he is an obſtinate Coxcomb; and tho' he ſeems but a Fool or Madman, he may be tampering with the *Chaldeans*, for all That; and therefore to put an End to his Tricks; the Houſe of *Jonathan* the Scribe, is the ſafeſt Lodging for him.

§ 32. The Hiſtory given us of *Jeremiah*'s Treatment, will, I think, abundantly warrant a Suppoſition of ſuch inconſiſtent Reaſonings, as are above repreſented about him: Now that his inviſible Commiſſion, (deſcrib'd to us as latent *as a Fire in the Bones*) did *over-rule* and forcibly conſtrain *his Will*, to continue in the woful Office of a Prophet, near Forty Years, the Remainder of his Signs alone, without other Proof, are enough to evince; for, according to the Word of the Lord, *Chap.* xiii. he gets him a Linnen Girdle, and wears it upon his Loins; and then comes another Word from the Lord, ſaying, *Take the Girdle which thou haſt got, which is upon thy Loins, and ariſe, go to Euphrates, and hide it there, in a Hole of the Rock, ſo he went and hid it by Euphrates, as the Lord commanded him: And it came to paſs after many Days, that the Lord ſaid unto him, ariſe, go to Euphrates, and take the Girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there; then I went* (ſays he) *to Euphrates, and digged, and took the Girdle from the Place, where I had hid it; and behold the Girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing: And the Word of the Lord came to me, ſaying, After this man-*

ner, (even by a Conqueſt from thence) *will I mar the Pride of Judah and Jeruſalem.* Now I think, ſo long a Journey twice gone, upon an Errand ſeemingly very trifling, becauſe his Prophecy might have been without it; and to the Country of the formidable Enemy, which gave a Handle to his perſonal Revilers to blacken him with Reports, as if he were correſponding with the *Chaldeans*; muſt in all rational Argument, acquit him of doing it by his own Will and Pleaſure.

§ 33. Having been ſo particular in reciting the Text in the laſt mention'd Sign given to the *Jews*, becauſe the Warrant of my producing it as ſuch, might appear in fuller Strength; we ſhall more briefly add, that *Jeremiah* being already become a Contempt and a Hatred; of courſe, his ſummoning the Antients of the Prieſts, and of the People, to ſee the Ceremony of his breaking a Potter's Earthen Veſſel, in their Preſence (which is there called *Jer.* xix. 14. *to propheſie*) could very little ſuit with his own Will and Pleaſure; any more than that, of taking and hiding great Stones, in the Clay of a Brick-kiln, and *propheſying* upon them, *Chap.* lxiii. Much leſs muſt it be pleaſing to the Shepherds of *Iſrael*, to ſee the Prophet *Zechariah*, acting with the *Inſtruments of a fooliſh Shepherd*, Chap. xi. 15. which, ſay the Commentators, were, a Crook ſharpened to kill, inſtead of being fit for the catching Sheep, and a Bag, without any thing in it, for their Uſe. Very unprofitable alſo, to the ſame Prophet, muſt it needs be, to take his Staff, *Beauty*, and cut it aſunder, and after that, to cut aſunder his other Staff, *Bands*; for it is evident that the Leaders were offended, and the poor of the Flock only knew, that it was the Word of the Lord, *Zech.* xi. 10, 14. deliver'd in this Manner. True therefore are the Words of our Saviour, if applied to the uſual Propheſying by Signs, *viz. they that that think they ſee, ſhall be made blind:* But ſurely, the Prophet himſelf, cannot but be acquitted from acting by Deſign in theſe Caſes; and in Conſequence, it ought to be concluded that he is therein over-ruled, by a Spirit ſuperior in Power, to himſelf.

§ 34. The more Scope the prophane Wit of Man has for his Banter and Ridicule; upon this Method of propheſying by Signs; the more Evidence even thence does ariſe, for the Prophet's Simplicity and Self-Denial, and for the Proof of a ſuperior Agent on him. Furthermore, thoſe that pleaſe, may read the Fourth Chapter of *Ezekiel*, and

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beginning of the Fifth, and then let them tell us, who would be content to lie three Hundred and Ninety Days upon one Side, and to eat and drink in the Manner, there preſcribed him, in the Sight of all Obſervers; and to ſhave himſelf, after a ſcandalous Faſhion, merely to figure out a Sermon that nobody cared to hear? And further, who among the Men of Pride, would ever think of ſuch a Way to expreſs it, as in Order to make himſelf a Sign to his Neighbours and Countrymen, of their ſpeedy deplorable Captivity, to dig a Hole thro' the Wall of his own Houſe, in their Sight? And by Day, in their Sight, to carry forth the Houſhold Goods, upon his Back, with a Muffler on his Face, *Chap.* xii. Nay, when the Delight of his Eyes, is taken from him with a Stroke, to with-hold the dropping one Tear, and dreſs himſelf without Regard to that Loſs; what is all this, but to render himſelf a Shame and a Hatred, *Chap.* xxiv. whilſt the Significancy of the Sign is overlooked? But I ſhall add no more, becauſe theſe numerous Inſtances already given, are more than ſufficient to ſhew, not only negatively, that the Prophet therein, acted not by his own Will; but alſo poſitively, that humane Nature being unable to ſupport, by its proper Power under many Particulars of them, ſomething above That, muſt in conſequence be granted, to have upheld him under them, as well as given the Command, and enforced an Obedience.

§ 35. If then the Prophets ſpake as they were moved in Signs, by the Holy Spirit, it would be no Objection at all to the Goſpel-Agency of the Spirit at any Time, to repeat the ſame Manner, tho' there was no Inſtance of the like in the ſhort Hiſtory of the *Acts*: But we have, therein alſo one Prophet *Acts* xi. 28. *ſignifying by the Spirit*, that there ſhould be great Dearth throughout all the World; where the Word, (σημαινε) is properly, to *declare by Signs*; and this being done by the Spirit, gives room ſufficient to think, it was ſo expreſſed. Another Prophet we find, of whom the Manner of the Sign is deſcribed, *by binding his own Hands and Feet with Paul's Girdle*, Acts xxi. 11. and adding, *Thus ſaith the Holy Spirit.* That Practice alſo of the Apoſtles, *Mark* vi. 13. to anoint with Oil, many that were ſick, ſeems to be a Prophetick Sign of their miraculous Healing. But that the Chriſtian Inſtitution was not without other Signs extraordinary, there is Proof from the Command of our Lord, to ſhake off the Duſt of their

Feet, for a Teſtimony againſt the City, that would not hear his Meſſengers; and from the Apoſtolick Injunction, of *greeting one another with an holy Kiſs:* Both which laſt commanded Things, with that of anointing alſo, were ſo properly Prophetick, that I conceive they rightly did, or ought to have ceaſed, with the Ages of the Spirit extraordinarily. But now having largely treated on this Manner of Propheſying by Signs, we proceed upon other Circumſtances, of the Spirit's Agency on the Prophet.

§ 36. *Thirdly,* As there has been plentiful Matter, already found, under the two preceding Heads, of Figurative Signs, and Extacy or Trance, for clear moral Proof of the temporary Coincidence of a Spirit, on the Perſon of a Prophet: And whereas, in the Diſcuſſion of that of Trance, it appears, that a total Deprivation of Senſe, was not therein neceſſary to be underſtood; but that, under the Scripture Term of Extacy, there was various Degrees of the Seceſſion, and giving way of the human Spirit and Senſes, upon the Incumbence of the Divine: So now we come to another Sort of Impreſſion from that ſuperveening Spirit that came upon the Prophet; which was equally felt by him, and equally remarkable to others, as the two former Circumſtances above-mention'd were. And that the Reader may have ſome Idea of what we are now diſtinctly to treat upon, on the Authority of Scripture Text; it cannot be improper here previouſly to hint, that the ſame will in Part be repreſented by that celebrated Tradition and Opinion of the *Hebrew* Doctors, which none of the Learned can be ſuppoſed to be ignorant of; that is, "That all "the Prophets except *Moſes*, when they propheſied, their "Joints trembled, and Strength of Body failed, and their "own Thoughts were diſturbed or interrupted."

§ 37. We have in former Inſtances of Extacy, obſerv'd, that ſometimes the Perſon affected, was capable of Argument and reſponding. When therefore, *Eſau* came to his dying Father, *Gen.* xxvii. 33. *and Iſaac trembled with a great trembling, greatly,* I ſee no Incongruity in the *Greek*, rendring, *Iſaac was in a Rapture of Extacy exceeding great*; wherein (according to the Criticks on the Text) the Fraud of *Jacob*, and the Will of God not wholly to cut off *Eſau*, was revealed to him; which agrees with what a modern great Maſter in Rabbinical Learning, *Buxtorf*, tells us, was a generally receiv'd Opinion among the *Jews, viz,* "That when the "Spirit

" Spirit of Prophecy came upon a Man, it took away all " the Strength and Firmneſs of his Body, and ſeized him " with ſo much Terror and violent Shaking, that his Life " ſcarce ſubſiſted in him. We are not however to take it, as if the outward Evidence of the Spirit's falling upon the Prophet, was limited to any Trepidation; but ought to be extended to all ſuch Bodily Actuation, as does not agree with its natural Motion; but by the Extravagance thereof, does denote an Agent, not confined to the genuin Laws of Nature, or the conſtituted Texture of the Body, much leſs, to that, which among Men is uſual or comely in Motion: Therefore, another Author of no mean Repute (*Anton. Huſſius's Theol. Jud.* lib. i. par. 1.) has with more Judgment given a further Scope than *Buxtorf*, to this Matter, ſaying, " The manner of Propheſying, has its *peculiar* " *Symptoms*, wherein tho' the Eſſence of Prophecy, does not " properly conſiſt; the Rabbins nevertheleſs, do even place " the very Eſſence of Prophecy (or its Definition) in thoſe " Forms and Manners."

§ 38. Now that theſe Opinions of the *Jewiſh* Doctors are not only theirs, but may appear to be in good meaſure admitted by the *Chriſtian*, in their Expoſition and Comments upon a great Number of Texts, in the ſacred Records, I muſt beg Leave to be pretty frequent, in quoting of them; not that I would have any thing built upon meerly human Authorities, nor do offer them for that End: But ſince there will be often found much Weight to lie in the Words of the Original Tongues, and alſo in thoſe antient *Eaſtern* Languages of the *Polyglotte* (which were the firſt, and are ſtill reputed the beſt Tranſlations of Holy Writ) whoever would deſire to underſtand the Word of God more accurately, lies under a moral Neceſſity to have Recourſe to them, and to the ableſt Explainers of them. Thus then, where we read, *Numb.* xi. 25. that *the Spirit reſted on the Seventy Elders, and they propheſied, and did not ceaſe*, the Interpreters by human Learning, ſay, " The Spirit here " means the Sign (or outward Appearance) of Prophecy, as " a general Part of it; ſo that by the Form and Manner of " Speech, there was Evidence upon them, of being acted " by the Divine Spirit; and theſe extraordinary Acts or " Modes in Propheſying, continued upon them all that " Day, which ſeem'd to be a Seal that God put to their " new Authority then conferr'd."

§ 39. Thoſe upon whom the Spirit of God extraordinarily fell (whatever the Gifts were that He beſtowed ſeverally, according to his own good Pleaſure) are properly enough reducible to the preſent Subject of this Head of Enquiry; which is, to diſcover the outward Symptoms of his Reſidence for a Time, when and as often, as he thought good, and not at the Pleaſure of the Man, whom he affected. As therefore he fell upon the Seventy two Elders, thereby giving them a ſolemn Induction to their Office, we find he did the like, in the Deſignation frequently of a Judge over *Iſrael*, as well as in the empowering a Prophet (under the ſtrict Denomination of the Word) to ſpeak in his Name; yet as it was one and the ſame Spirit, that wrought ſo different Effects and Gifts, and we have no Warrant to think that the external Operations, were otherwiſe in the one Caſe of the Spirit falling than in the other: On the contrary, as we find that there is much Agreement, in the outward Symptoms of his reſting on them both. Proofs therefore taken, from thoſe that were Prophets, in the larger Senſe, are equally valid to the Thing in hand, as thoſe that are drawn from the Preſidents of Prophecy proper. To proceed then upon this Head, of Enquiry into the appearing Manner of the Spirit's Operation; inſtead of the uſual Expreſſion, *the Spirit came upon*, the *Hebrew*, and all the moſt authentick Tranſlations have it, *Judg.* vi. 34. *the Spirit clothed Gideon*: From which Alluſion to the Garments, that cover the whole Body, we may juſtly infer, that ſomething appear'd on him, viſibly affecting all the Parts of it; for the Garment is as open to the Eye of all Men, as a *Spirit* it ſelf is viſible to none, no, not the inherent natural one of Man; and leſs therefore a more pure Celeſtial Eſſence.

§ 40. There is not one in the Old Teſtament, (*Iſaac* excepted) that was introduced into the World, with ſo much Solemnity from Heaven, as *Sampſon*; in Faith whereof, his Mother gave him that Name, ſignifying in the *Hebrew*, *a little Sun*; and Chriſtians to this Day, do pay him a peculiar Honour, in making him a Figurative Type of the all-illuminating Sun of Righteouſneſs. On this Man the Spirit of God dwelt afterwards abundantly; But the firſt Notice of it is, *Judg.* xiii. 25. *when the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at Times*; where the *Hebrew*

brew is, *to agitate him by Intervals*; and the Word in its Original carries in it, an Alluſion to the Strokes of a Smith, repeated with his Hammer: Wherefore, it was ſome violent Impulſe that moved him, and not an interior ſilently progreſſive one, ſuch as many Men would fain confine the Motions of the Holy Spirit to. And this will appear further evident, on the ſame ſacred Perſon (a Judge of *Iſrael*) in the next Chapter, *Judg.* xiv. 6, 19. for where it is twice ſaid, the *Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him*; the *Hebrew* Word expreſſes, that *it ruſhed upon him*; thereby ſhadowing out the Impetuoſity of a Guſt of Wind, that tho' inviſible in it ſelf, yet ſufficiently diſcovers its Agency on a Tree, by the Agitation of the Branches, and Leaves. In like Manner, when the Joints and Fibres of a human Body are ſuddenly invaded with unnatural Emotions, without Pain and Illneſs natural, what can be plainer Demonſtration of an inviſible Agent upon him? And that the Fortitude of *Sampſon* was not in him, as any habitual or natural Strength in others, the Text determines by aſſerting, that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him expreſly, whenever his moſt notable Actions were performed.

§ 41. As then in the Deſignation of the Seventy Elders to their Office, and in the ſolemn Vocation of *Othniel*, *Gideon*, *Jephthah* and *Sampſon* to be Judges of *Iſrael*, the Spirit of the Lord *came upon them*, as the great Seal of Heaven, giving their Commiſſion. The like we read touching the Appointment of *Saul* to the Royal Prerogative, 1 *Sam.* x. 6, 13. for ſays *Samuel*, *Thou ſhalt meet a Company of Prophets, with muſical Inſtruments before them, propheſying; and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou ſhalt propheſie with them, and ſhall be turned into another Man, and when theſe Signs are come unto thee*, &c. The Commentators agree, " that the Words, *turned into another Man*, are but " an Explanation of the preceding, *thou ſhalt propheſie*; and " the doing thus, does here mean (ſay they) the ſinging of " ſacred Hymns, conjointly with the Muſick, and that, " after ſuch a Manner, as *Saul* having never learned to " ſing, could not of himſelf do." I do not mention this Expoſition, with any Purpoſe of contemning it; becauſe from many other Places of Scripture, I believe it may be fairly deduced, that ſinging by, or under the Spirit, was attended with ſomething in the Tone of the Voice, which was not natural, nor could be practicable, by the ſame Perſon, without that Influence: But at the ſame Time,

the Words of the Text do afford as much Foundation to believe, that the Incurrence of the Spirit, did as well influence the Motion of his Body, as that of his Voice; for the *Hebrew* Word there uſed, the *Spirit will come upon thee*, is ſo emphatical, that it ſignifies alſo, *to leap upon* him, and the *Greek* and *Vulg. Lat.* render it, in that Acceptation: And ſince all the Standers by took Notice of the Alteration upon *Saul*, and the Word *Company*, being properly Men in a long Line, or Chorus, That Circumſtance doubtleſs allndes as much to Dancing as Singing; and conſidering the Noiſe of Inſtruments then ſounding, I ſhould think the Impreſſions ſupernatural on his Bodily Motion, were more likely to be obſervable, than the Tone of his Voice; as well as, better agree with the Term uſed in the Text, of the Spirit leaping upon him.

§ 42. And thus, we read, *David danced before the Lord*, 2 Sam. vi. 14, 20. *leaping after the manner* (ſays the *Hebrew*) *of a Goat or a Lamb*; inſomuch that when his Wife charged him, with uncovering himſelf in it, as one of the vain (moſt ſcoundrel) Fellows ſhameleſly uncovereth, or maketh himſelf ridiculous; he makes no other Apology, than that it *was before the Lord*, and he would again *be more vile* than ſo, and play [*Greek*, dance] before the Lord. Wherefore, if *David*, actuated by the Spirit of God, did in this manner, I ſee no Reaſon to object to the like in *Saul*, under the foregoing Paragraph; eſpecially, when we conſider that the ſame Spirit falling upon him at *Ramoth*, 1 *Sam.* xix. 24. made him ſtrip off his Clothes, and *propheſie before Samuel*, and *fall*, or that he then was repeatedly falling down naked during all that Day, and all that Night. Well therefore, may the Wiſe and moſt Literate, here acknowledge, that in falling down to the Earth, he did but what the Holieſt of Men have, and muſt do; for who among frail Mortals can do otherwiſe than ſuccumbe under the Weight of a Spirit ruſhing upon him? There needs therefore no Apology, for dancing, leaping, and ſtripping naked, or any other extravagant Behaviour, than this; that if the Spirit of God deprive Men wholly in ſome Trances, of the Exerciſe of their Intelect and Senſes, He may ſurely do the ſame in Part, and in a leſs Degree: And whenever this leſſer Sort of Extacy is mention'd, it is to the Advantage of Reveal'd Religion (as I conceive) to let the Text ſpeak out in its full Extent, touching the Operation of a ſuperior Agent upon the Perſon of the Propher, But taking

taking for granted, that ſuch Actions as theſe, are indubitable Proofs of that incontrollable Agency; I leave it to the Conſideration of all pious Perſons, whether in Defiance of the Text, the giving way to the Principles of *Semi-Sadduciſm* touching theſe Matters, does not in its natural Tendency, encreaſe and ſtrengthen all Deiſm, and conſequently Profaneſs.

§ 43. When *Samuel* anointed *David* in the midſt of his Brethren, it is added, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 13. *the Spirit of the Lord came upon* [*Hebr.* and *Greek*, leaped, or danced upon] *David, from that Day forward.* Other antient Tranſlations in the *Polyglotte* render this Text more expreſly, and ſay, it came upon him with Violence, and begun then to agitate him, and from thenceforth did ſo: But it ſuffices in this Caſe, we are upon, to obſerve, that the beſt Authorities for ſacred Writ, do herein allow him to be ſhaken, during that noble Life of Inſpiration, whereof we have unto this Day, the happy Product. And as in theſe and other Places, the Inſpirer of the ſacred Text has choſen ſuch Words, as do clearly ſhadow out to us, ſome viſible Appearances of his Reſidence on the Perſon of his Meſſengers: So, where the Text does not uſe Expreſſions ſignificant of it, the Senſe of the Context ſeems ſometimes neceſſarily to imply the ſame: As for Example; When King *Jehoſhaphat* had proclaim'd a Faſt, upon the Invaſion of a potent Army, and *the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel, in the midſt of the Congregation*, 2 *Chron.* xx. 14. how ſhould the King and People be ſo ſatisfied of the Certainty of it, as to bow down their Faces to the Earth in Adoration and Thankfulneſs for that Vouchſafement from Heaven, without ſome outward Indications, that he ſpake not of himſelf? And if theſe muſt of Neceſſity be allow'd, we can't ſuppoſe any other ſo juſtly as thoſe, which moſt frequently are expreſs'd in the Text it ſelf.

§ 44. But to return to the more expreſſive Scripture-Aſſertions of a Spirit over-ruling the Prophet, with Power and Force efficacious; we have in *Job*, the Declaration of one inſpir'd, touching that his Eſtate, thus deſcribed, *Job* xxxii. 18--20. *I am full of Words, the Spirit of my Belly conſtraineth me; behold! my Belly is as Wine, which hath no Vent; it is ready to burſt like new Bottles: I will ſpeak, that I may breathe, (or be refreſhed.)* To explain which Text, I here give the Words of the Divines upon it: "*The Spirit*

of

" *of the Belly* (ſay they) is a metaphorical Phraſe, having re-
" ference to, either a Wind in the Bowels, forcing its Way
" out, or rather to the Labour-Pangs of a Woman, which
" ſhe cannot reſtrain; and ſignifies that he was in ſuch
" Pain, that he muſt, whether he won'd or no, utter him-
" ſelf. Another Metaphor which he uſes, to expreſs his
" urgent Neceſſity to ſpeak, is, That of new Wine on the
" Ferment, in a Cask without Vent, and therefore ſays,
" his Belly being ſo pent, would burſt without Eaſe given
" it; and as a Man that is ſwoln up, has Difficulty of
" Breathing, he ſays, I will ſpeak, that I may have Li-
" berty, and be no more thus ſtreightened." Wherefore, the Caſe being ſo very plain, that the Spirit did moſt pow-erfully enforce him, we will leave it upon the Foot of the Letter it ſelf, whether ſuch a State as is here expreſſed, muſt not be obviouſly manifeſt to thoſe preſent; for indeed, he himſelf in the Text appeals to all Spectators, in the Word, *Behold.*

§ 45. What has been obſerv'd of the Spirit affecting the Body of *David* under Inſpiration, will not ſeem ſo ſtrange to the Reader, if he alſo conſider what follows, *viz.* That the Title of *a Pſalm upon an Extacy*, is by the *Greek* affixed to the 31ſt, and a Trance there mention'd expreſly in the 22d Verſe: And again, in the 116th and 11th, *I ſaid in my Extacy*, (by other antient Verſions explained, *my trembling*, or *Agitation*,) and the Circuumſtance inſerted to attend his State, is thus deſcribed elſewhere, *Pſal.* xxxix. 2, 3. *I was dumb with Silence, and my Sorrow was ſtirred,* [*Greek*, my Sore was ulcerated and encreaſed;] *my Heart was hot within me; while I was muſing, the Fire burned, then ſpake I with my Tongue*: Wherefore, the Neceſſity upon the *Pſalmiſt*, of venting himſelf, was ſomewhat parallel to that above-mentioned in *Job*, and both of them to the enſuing Caſe of *Jeremiah*; for this Prophet, as well as *David* and *Elihu*, was bent upon Silence, *Jer.* xx. 7, 9. but ſays he, *thou, O Lord, art ſtronger than I, and haſt prevailed*; that is, thou haſt laid this Burthen of Propheſying upon me, how was I able to withſtand? I did not of my own Will, but by thy En-forcement, take it upon me. *But his Word was in mine Heart, as a burning Fire, ſhut up in my Bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay*; the *Greek* ſays, the burning Fire inflamed his Bones, and he quite fainted. Now, let any Man conſider with himſelf, whether ſuch an inherent and urgently impelling inward Force (if it were no more

more than that of a natural Fever, wrought by a ſupernatural Agency upon him, be not irreſiſtible to the Perſon it works upon: And if ſo, how can Men upbraid the Prophet with Want of a Commiſſion in ſuch a Caſe, or running before he is ſent?

§ 46. What has been repreſented to us, in the Perſons of *Elihu*, *David*, and *Jeremiah*, may well be granted to amount to ſuch a Sort of Proof, of their Commiſſion as was to others morally evidential of a ſupernatural Force impelling, and to themſelves, ſuch as fell under the State of an abſolute Neceſſity; unleſs they would have flewn in the Face of that Heavenly Authority that laid it upon them. And theſe Caſes do fully open to us, the Meaning of the Apoſtle's Words, 1 *Cor.* ix. 16, 17. *A Neceſſity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Goſpel; and if I do it not willingly, but againſt my Will, a Diſpenſation* (or Prophetick Commiſſion) *is committed unto me*; becauſe, where there are ſupernatural Urgencies of like Force with theſe, no Man can be ſaid to run before he is ſent. And queſtionleſs, there muſt be unavoidably, ſome outward Appearance of ſuch like preſſing Streights as the Text frequently aſſerts: But as to the Philoſophick Principles of *Sadduciſm* and *Semi-Sadduciſm*, touching Circumſtances of this Nature; what poſſibly does, or does not exceed any natural Power, I am excuſed from Debate on them, by the ſole Purport herein, of repreſenting the Affirmations of Scripture, for my concluſive Law in judging of things, as they carry a Moral Eviction. To purſue therefore, without Interruption, my Purpoſe.

§ 47. The young Man, the Prophet, who went to *Ramoth-Gilead*, 2 *Kings* 9. 4, 11. met with the Entertainment uſually given to thoſe of his Character; for, ſay they, in Banter, *Wherefore came this mad Fellow to thee?* Suppoſe then, the Cirumſtances largely expreſſed, in *Elihu*, *David*, and *Jeremiah*, had driven him to go to *Jehu* in a Heat, viſible in his Countenance, and Manner of Geſture, and in running out of Doors, when his Meſſage was done; what could be expected from military Officers, but the Bluntneſs of calling him a *Bedlamite?* According to the *Greek*, he had Fits upon him, or the Falling-Sickneſs: But as this could not denominate him mad, it ſeems when he came out of them, there was ſomething in his Geſture, that, other antient Tranſlations with the *Hebrew*, by divers Words allude

lude to: For these express him to be *a Fool, in a furious Rage, frenzical and distracted, out of his Wits*; and upon that foot, *Jehu*'s Answer is to be taken, *Ye know the Man, and his Communication*; as if he had said, Ay, ye have well said, you take him right; he is a Madman, and what he has told me, is like him, nonsensical, fooliſh Stuff; why should I trouble you with it? For the Word, *Communication*, is in the *Greek*, *Pratling*, and in the *Arab.* the *Speech of a Sot*. Notwithstanding all which, neither did *Jehu*, or the Officers believe him to be out of his Wits, as appears by their putting all at Stake immediately, upon the Credit of his Word: Therefore, they meant no otherwise by those Sarcastick Words, than the common Definition of a Prophet, taken up by the Profane and ignorant, (designedly cherished by the Priests) meerly from the Outside Appearance of antick Postures, and Behaviour: Whereas, these Gentlemen of Sense and Quality, understood better; and Kings themselves, even the most wicked, were often struck with Awfulness, upon a like Message; but for the common Opinion, the Learned do give it on the Text, thus; "They knew this Man to be a Prophet, by his "Manner and Behaviour; for Prophets were esteem'd "Fools and Madmen, because while they were actuated by "the Spirit of Prophecy, their Bodily Strength failed, and "they seem'd to be distracted."

§ 48. These outward Signs of a Spirit, forcibly Influencing the Prophet, are more or less; unto which, are applicable those Passages, *the Hand of the Lord was strong upon me*; *he spake to me with a strong Hand*, and the like: And the Sign visible sometimes might go no higher, than those that appear upon a Man in great Anger: In which Sense we may understand that of 1 *Sam.* xi. 6. *And the Spirit of God came upon Saul, and his Anger was kindled* (or burned) *greatly, and he took a Yoke of Oxen, and hewed them in Pieces, and sent them thro' all the Coasts of Israel.* Thus also, was *Jeremiah* affected with Fire in his Bones, when he says, *Jer.* vi. 10, 11. *To whom shall I speak and give Warning that they may hear? Behold, their Ear cannot harken, therefore I am full of the Fury of the Lord, I am weary with holding in, I will pour it out upon the Children in the Streets*; the *Chaldee* has it, *I am filled with Prophecy in Fury from the Presence of the Lord*: And the Sense of this Passage by Interpreters, is given thus; "Tho' I deal with you in Passion, do not impute it to my "Anger, but to the Spirit of God, that transports and hur-

"ries

" ries me on; I am not acted by any Perſonal Indignation,
" or my own proper Motion; but am ſo ſwelled up with
" Fury from God, that I ſhall even burſt, unleſs I break
" out into this Vehemence, and pour it forth upon your
" Heads." In like Manner, when *Ezekiel* tells us, *Ezek.* iii. 14. *He went in hot Anger or the Heat of his Spirit*, there is join'd with it, that the ſame was, with Bitterneſs or Sorrow to himſelf; but *the Hand of the Lord prevailed over* (or was ſtrong upon) him; which ſay the Comentators, means; " He was not therein acted, as a Man, raſhly, but impel-
" led by the Power and Spirit of God, therefore he did but
" obey, as driven by a forceable Impulſe of the Spirit;
" and it appears by his Sorrow, that he did reluctate, and
" unwillingly in himſelf, was, by the urging Vehemence
" of the Spirit of Prophecy, carried on this Occaſion."

§ 49. The falſe Prophet is ſaid to run without an impelling Force, but the true not ſo; for as to the Hand of the Lord in the preceding Paragraph, the Word in *Hebrew* ſignifying *Hand*, means alſo Vigor and powerful Strength; wherefore when its apply'd to the Spirit of Prophecy, as in *Ezek.* viii. 1. and Twenty other Places; then ſay the Learned, " It ſtands oppoſed to all Human Abilities, and intimates
" as much as if the Prophet teſtified; that whilſt the *efficacious Operation* of the Spirit of God was upon him, he
" had in a Sort put off the Man; and in this particular
" Text wherein *the Hand of the Lord fell upon him*, we are
" to conceive that *it fell upon him like the Force of a penetrating Flaſh of Lightning.*" If then the Spirit of Prophecying (here called, the Hand of the Lord) when it fell upon a Man, carried along with it, a penetrating Force like to that of Lightning, than which nothing in Nature is more piercing; certainly the Elders of *Judah*, who ſat round him in the Houſe, muſt be Witneſſes of ſomething outwardly appearing, of ſo aſtoniſhing a Rapidity of the Power, that ſtruck him; and we have no Reaſon to doubt, but it was ſo; as the Learned have explained it; becauſe the ſame *Hebrew* Word which ſignifies *to ruſh upon*, which is found often in the Text, where the *Engliſh* renders *the Spirit fell*, does as well mean, *to penetrate or ſtrike through*; whereby we have another Metaphor, expreſſive of that Violence, wherewith ſuperior Spirits act upon weak, and nothing Mortals: All which Expreſſions ought to have preſerved, the true Worſhippers of God, from halving and trimming the Matter, with *Infidel Saducees*; to the End, that the ſacred

cred Boundaries, God has ſet about the Manner and Appearances of his Revelation, ſhould not have been trodden down and levell'd by the Definitions only, of an undiſcernable Illuminations of the Mind; ſince we find the Holy Text frequently above expreſſes it, in Metaphors and Similitudes of the greateſt Violence, that we are capable of receiving, the Knowledge of it by. And thus may we underſtand that, wherein the Prophet *Micah* declares to us touching himſelf, that he was full of the Power and Might of the Spirit of the Lord, *Chap.* iii. 8.

§ 50. Let the outward Actions of a Prophet be as extravagant, as thoſe of Fools and Madmen, yet even theſe do directly tend to the Reverence of God, by impreſſing the greater Certainty of a Spirit's Agency, whilſt the habitual Sobriety, and good Judgment of the Man at other Times, ſhews it does not, viciate his Brain: Whereas an Infidelity either partial or total, of Supernatural Agencies, under the Colour and upon meer Suppoſitions of what the Natural may extend to, does leſs or more, ſap the Foundation of all revealed Religion: But to go on, with what is written; *Jeremiah* ſays, *Jer.* xlviii. 31. *I will howl for Moab*; which ſome of the antient Tranſlations render, *I am forced to howl:* In like Manner, *Micah* is not aſhamed in his own Perſon, to ſay, *Micah* i. 8. *I will wail and howl, I will go ſtript and naked*, (nay, that is not enough) *I will make a wailing like the Dragons, and mourning as the Owls*; for this was inforced upon him, that thereby he might repreſent the Scope of his Prophecy touching the diſmal State, into which that People were falling. But having largely treated of the Variety of theſe Operations of the Spirit, in the manner of his Appearance on the Prophet, I do commit all to the Authority of him, who wrote it thus; tho' poſſibly, the Age of *Hoſea* will be found not the laſt, that has determined raſhly touching God, *Hoſea* ix. 7. in theſe Points, *that the Prophet is a Fool, the Spiritual Man (Greek,* πνευματοφορος, the Man agitated by the Spirit) *is mad.*

§ 51. Under the two preceding Appearances of a Spirit on the Prophet, in Extacy and figurative Signs, we have already proved ſufficient Indications in the New Teſtament, to manifeſt; that in the Prophetick Operations of the ſame one Spirit, there was a Harmony between the New and the Old; and I am perſwaded, that on this Head alſo, of extraordinary and viſible Sumptoms attending

ing the Perſon, on whom the Spirit fell, a like Harmony will be evident between them; for, as in the laſt quoted Text of the Old Teſtament, the Words *Prophet*, and *Spiritual Man*, are uſed as Terms ſynonimous, or of like Signification, the latter being only explicatory of the former, and expreſſing the Definition of a Prophet to be (by the *Greek*) *one moved or agitated by the Spirit*: To the ſame Effect in 1 *Cor.* xiv. 37. to be a *Prophet* or *Spiritual Man*, are uſed alike, as in *Hoſea*, for Words of parallel Meaning, both defining the ſame Perſon, and the latter explaining the former. It remains therefore, only to examine whether (*Pneumaticos*,) the Spiritual Man in the *Corinthians*, be the ſame in Signification with (*Pneumatophoros*,) the Spiritual Man in *Hoſea*: And this, if we can take the Judgment of the moſt Learned in the *Greek* Tongue, for a Deciſion of the two Words, will be out of Doubt: Wherefore, I appeal to Mr. *Pool*'s *Synopſis*, for the Senſe and Conſent of the Divines, that *Pneumaticos*, in that Text of the New Teſtament, is of like Meaning with *Pneumatophoros*; and then it follows, that the Spiritual Man, is, under the Goſpel alſo, *one agitated by the Spirit*, or as the *Æthiopick* Verſion has it, *one whom the Holy Spirit is upon*. Again, in 1 *Cor.* xii. 1, 3. where the Apoſtle ſpeaks *concerning Spiritual Men*, the ſame Expoſitors ſay, he treats there of Perſons, *inſpired by a Spirit upon them*, whether it were a good or an evil one; for, ſay they, the Term is applicable to both, as appears, 1 *John* iv. 1, 2, 3, 6. upon which Foot it is, that St. *Paul* in directing the Deſire of Spiritual Gifts, chiefly in Order to Propheſying, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 1. does in the 12th Verſe take Notice of their being deſirous *of Spirits*, (πνευματων,) and then adds, *ſeek that ye may abound*, which *Chryſoſtom* conſtrues, *ſeek of God that ye may have them in great Abundance to the edifying of the Church*; for he that propheſieth, ſpeaketh unto Men to Edification, and Exhortation, and Comfort. Wherefore, from theſe Texts I conceive it to be clear, that the Spiritual Man, or Prophet, under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, was under like Definition of the Prophet in the Old Teſtament, expreſſed there ſo frequently, by the Terms of *the Hand of the Lord*, or *Spirit of the Lord falling upon* him, and the like.

§ 52. That there was therefore ſome viſible Signs, of the Spirit falling on the Prophet in the new Teſtament alſo, does appear by what followeth; for we find, even in the Perſon of the great Prophet, whom on that Account we are alone

alone to avow for our Maſter, that when He ſubmitted to be baptized, and the Holy Spirit was ſeen thereon to deſcend upon Him, *Mark* i. 12. *Immediately the Spirit driveth him into the Wilderneſs:* Now the Word in that Text *driveth*, implies in it a Force compelling, in whatever Acceptation it can be taken, and the Commentators allow it was a viſible one, to thoſe, from whom it locally ſeparated him; for tho' an inviſible Spirit conveys his Operation on the Prophet, by Ways imperceptible, this does not obſtruct, but that That Efficacy ſecretly conveyed, ſhould produce Symptoms, outwardly viſible: And as a Fever, or any Paſſion of Joy, or Sorrow internal, works Effects external; ſo, and much more may we well conceive, that a powerful Spirit, in his ſtrongly touching upon a Man, ought to be ſuppoſed, from the Courſe of natural Reaſoning, to work Effects outwardly viſible. But to return to the Propriety of the Word εκβαλλει, *driveth*, we moſt ordinarily find it in the new Teſtament rendred by the Engliſh *caſt out*, or forth; whereby it ſeems to allude to the Force of a Man's Hand, caſting from him a Stone or Net, and the like: In this Senſe, we are commanded by our Redeemer, *Mat.* ix. 38. *to pray the Lord of the Harveſt, that he will caſt forth,* εκβαλη *Labourers into his Harveſt*; and as the Word Labourer is a Term much uſed by St. *Paul*, to expreſs the Prophetick Miniſter; we may well gather from it, that his Miſſion, was not without ſome Force, from the Hand of the Lord, that caſt him forth into the Vinyard.

§ 53. Now that the Lord Himſelf, was pleas'd to ſtoop further to the Manner of the *Prophets* known among the *Jews*, of whom concerning the Fleſh He came; and among whom his Prophetick Miniſtry was exerciſed, is plain from the like Imputation upon Him, as had been in general upon them; for as *the Prophet is a Fool, the ſpiritual Man is mad*, had been in Language their common Entertainment; ſo our bleſſed Saviour, had ſomthing viſible upon him, probably (ſay the Learned) ſome ſort of extraordinary Emotion, ſuch as the Prophets uſed to have, that gave the Occaſion to his Friends, of going to lay hold on him, *Mark.* iii. 21, 22. for they ſaid, *He is beſides himſelf*; and the *Scribes* ſaid plainly, *He hath Beelzebub*; the Word, there rendred *beſide himſelf*, the *Vulg. Lat.* and *Æthiop.* render, *furious or raging*; and in *John* x. 20. many of them ſaid, *He hath a Devil, and is mad*; on which latter Text the *Arab.* has it *a Devil is in him*, and the *Syr.* has it, *He is furious mad:* When therefore the

the Caſe of the Maſter is ſo very plain, we need not be exact in the Enquiry into the Condition of the Servant; as where *Feſtus* charges St. *Paul* with being mad, *Acts* xxvi. 24, 25. tho' the Words of Sobriety ſpoken, were enough to confute the Charge in reſpect to a natural Frenzy, yet the Manner of Prophetical Emotions, might perhaps give *Feſtus* the Occaſion, upon which Men generally had fixed that Denomination on the Prophets: And if it were thus, with this ſort of Madneſs, the Sobriety of St. *Paul*, might well enough conſiſt, for ſo he himſelf confeſſes, 2 *Cor.* v. 13. *If we be beſides our ſelves, it is to God, or if we be ſober, it is for your Cauſe.* The Word render'd, *beſide our ſelves*, being here the ſame that is laſt above-mention'd, touching his Maſter and ours, the like Expoſitions belong to it; and the Annotators on the Text obſerve, "that the Opponents of the Apoſtle, "did calumniate, upon the Subject of *Paul*'s Extacies, inſi-"nuating from thence, that he was not always right in his "Senſes; and herein therefore, the Apoſtle confeſſes the "Point of Extacy, and oppoſes to it, that he was however, "when out of that State, equally rational as others: Thus "the Word *ſober*, ſtands here oppoſed, to the Actions of "a Man under the extatick Influence, as we read it to be "in the Man poſſeſſed with the Devil, *Mark* v. 15. who up-"on his Ejection, became cloathed and in his right Mind; "for *Energumens*, (or Perſons poſſeſſed) were frequently "taken with Madneſs, as appears by the Inſinuation, *John* "x. 20."

§ 54. I know the Word *Energumen*, has been among Chriſtians generally received, as a Diſcrimination of one poſſeſſed by an evil Spirit, and yet the Word in it ſelf ſignifies no more, than to be powerfully wrought upon; and the ſame Word, is in the New Teſtament divers Times uſed in a good Senſe; as particularly in *James* v. 16. *The effectual fervent Prayer*, is in the *Greek*, a Prayer *Energoumence*; which the Expounders of the Text (ſo often quoted) ſay, "ſignifies the Prayer of a Man of God, moved by the "Holy Spirit, in like Manner as the Prophets were, when "they prayed; as alſo thoſe in the New Teſtament, who "had the miraculous Gifts (call'd 1 *Cor.* xii. 10. *Energeemata*) "and it was the being actuated, by ſuch an Impetuoſity "and Emotion, as that, from whence thoſe that were agi-"tated by evil Spirits, were termed, *Energumens*." Which kind of Praying, ſeems to be deſcribed to us, by one of its outward Symptoms, *Rom.* viii. 26. *The Spirit it ſelf maketh*

Interceſſion [*Greek*, ſuper-interceedeth] *for us, with Groanings which cannot be utter'd*: Wherein Dr. *Hicks* ſays, the Spirit it ſelf means, the inſpired Miniſter, who expreſſed Groans or Sighs, στεναγμοις, (ſhort Breathings) Supernatural. And indeed I can ſee no Reaſon, why the Word *Energumen*, ſhould be limited to a bad Senſe, any more than that of Enthuſiaſm ordinarily now is. But leſt they ſhould think, that an Inſpiration from good Spirits, according to 1 *Cor.* xiv. 12. is in it ſelf unjuſtifiable by the Tenor of the Chriſtian Revelation, I ſhall (till that Matter be more diſtinctly handled) here add, a very remarkable Obſervation, which is that in *Rev.* xxii. 6. where it is written, *the Lord God of the Holy Prophets hath ſent his Angel to ſhew unto his Servants*; there all the Antient Verſions of the *Polyglotte* [*Syr. Vulg Lat. Arab.* and *Æthiop.*] have it, *the Lord God of the SPIRITS of the holy Prophets*, &c. even as our *Alexandrian* Manuſcript, and divers other valuable Authorities, concur ſtill to retain the ſame, as in Dr. *Mill*'s Teſtament.

§ 55. As to ſome viſible Symptoms therefore attending the Inſpiration of the Chriſtian Prophet, tho' what has been ſaid, might ſuffice; yet there remains ſtill more, to confirm it; for when our Divine Maſter ſpake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive, he compares it, *John* vii. 38, 39. to *Rivers of living Water*, that were to *flow out of the Belly*; now unleſs the Spirit ſo received, did affect the Body (as *Job* xxxii. 19.) in ſome Manner, that it ſeem'd to flow from thence, I am not able to give any ſatisfactory Account of that Expreſſion; but granting that it did, then the Text in *Job* explains it: I conceive alſo, that the Similitude of *a Reed ſhaken with the Wind*, applied to *John Baptiſt*, and his Rejectors, ſaying, *Luke* vii. 33. that *he had a Devil*, do ſufficiently deſcribe him to have ſome viſible Marks upon him of an Energumen: But having already, very largely inſiſted on this Head, of ſome outward Symptoms of a Spirit's reſiding on the Prophets, both of the Old and New Teſtament; I leave the Imputation of Drunkenneſs ſuppoſed by the Enemies of Chriſtianity, to attend the Effuſion of *Pentecoſt*, to be accounted for (by whoſoever pleaſes) ſo well, as by bodily Emotions ſome Ways reſembling thoſe, that are in Drink. Indeed St. *Peter* ſeems to allow ſome Ground for the Suppoſition, by referring them to ſomewhat ſeen. And why it ſhould be a Shame to them, to have it ſo, any more than for *Jeremiah*, I know not; and as to that Prophet, we find he owns, *Jer.* xxiii. 9.

that

that *all his Bones ſhook and he was like a drunken Man, like a Man whom Wine had quite overcome, from the Preſence of the Lord, and from the Preſence* (or Manifeſtation) *of the Words of his Holineſs.* For thus the *Hebrew, Greek, Chaldee, Vulg. Lat. Syriac, and Arabick,* read the latter Part of this Text, with a few little Variations, that ſeverally add particular beautious Illuſtrations, which brighten, but not alter the Senſe here cited of it.

§ 56. *Philo* the *Jew,* who lived in the Time of the *Apoſtles* (*p.* 9. 178. *edit. Turn.*) ſays, "Whatever Man's Soul is "filled with the Grace of Prophecy, he is preſently over-"joyed and tranſported into Laughter and dancing; for it is "inebriated, (*Κεβακευται,*) and hence it is to the Profane, that "the inſpired Perſon appears drunk, and out of his Wits; "for of all Extacies, the moſt remarkable, is the Divine Epi-"leptick Fury, incident to the Prophets." Therefore, for the firſt Congregation of Believers in Chriſt, to have upon them ſome Tottering or Noddings, like to thoſe drunk with new Wine; whilſt they, being full of the Spirit of tranſporting Joy, from *the Manifeſtation of the Beauty of Divine Glory* (as that in *Jeremiah,* is expreſſed in the *Greek*) *ſpoke out the wonderful Works of God*; has nothing in it that we need to be aſhamed of: But laſtly, as in the Old Teſtament the Hand of the Lord, or the Spirit of God falling upon ſuch and ſuch, has been already there made apparent, that a Force like that of a ruſhing Wind or penetrating Lightning, was contain'd in the Word *fell*; ſo when we read the ſame Word, of the holy Spirit (diſtinguiſhed from the evil One) falling upon thoſe, *Acts* viii. 16. x. 44. with what Congruity to the Analogy of Faith, can we preſume, that the ſame Expreſſion, of *the Spirit falling upon Chriſtians,* ſhould be exempted wholly, from what was contained in the ſame Word, of the ſame Spirit's *falling,* upon the antient Prophets? The Diſpenſation of the Spirit upon the Prophets, even under the Law, was ever Goſpel, or a happy Meſſage from God to Men; and the Circumſtance or Manner of the Spirit when it ſo *fell,* carries ſo near an Affinity to the Expreſſion of Trance and Rapture, which often hapned, that to exempt the Word from importing any outward *viſible* Tokens, when *Simon* the Sorcerer ſaw it; muſt, I think, be unwarrantable from Scripture.

§ 57. *Fourthly,* Having thus far traced the Lineaments of the Prophetick Spirit, in the outward Marks of his In-

herence temporary, under Extacies, and figurative Signs, and other visible Effects of his Operation on the Body; such as God has been pleas'd upon assured Authorities, to transmit to us, for our Information in the Knowledge of his Ways, in that Matter; let us now proceed to the Enquiry, into what Grounds the Scripture might afford, of the common Opinion among the *Jews*, several Times already hinted; *That, all the Prophets except* Moses, *propheſied by the Hand, Operation and Influence of an Angel*; for if God has ſpoken in *divers Manners*, theſe may imply as well ſomething, relating to the Inſtrumentality of Angels or without it, on this Head, as the different Forms of *Voice, Viſion, Dream*, and *Inſpiration* proper; and ſeeing that upon the other Heads of *Voice, Viſion*, and *Dream*, it has already appear'd beyond any poſſible Doubt, that the Majeſty of Heaven, unapproachable and inviſible to Mortals, did uſe the Medium of Angelick Spirits, whereby to convey and reveal his Mind and Will to Men; and yet in doing ſo, there was the ſame Commiſſion, and Stamp of Divine Authority, without any Difference or Diminution, with reſpect to its Obligation upon Men, as if the ſame had been immediate, and without ſuch Interpoſition of an Angel in the Revelations. I am ſure we can never doubt, whether the Divine Revelation by other Prophets, were as valid, as that by the Hands of *Moſes*; and whilſt we keep our ſelves within the Boundary, and are confined by the Diſcoveries of the Word of God upon Record, which in all the Parts of it, is held equally valid, we cannot but be ſafe; and I ſuppoſe a diligent Search into the Text, can in no Caſe be blameable, upon the Condition that we build no general Concluſion, without the Concurrency of the Tenour of the whole.

§ 58. Upon theſe Terms we proceed to examine, not whether the foreſaid Opinion among the *Jews* be true or not; but by Occaſion of its Mention, let us enquire, whether any Prophetick Inſpiration be by the Scripture allowable, to paſs through the Inſtrumentality or Agency of an Angel upon the Prophet; for the only Subject of theſe Papers, is to look into the Teſtimony of Jeſus, and the Ways of the Holy Spirit of Prophecy; which St. *Peter* calls, *1 Pet.* i. 11. *the Spirit of Chriſt which was in the Prophets*; ſignifying and teſtifying the Things beforehand that concerned his Sufferings and Glory: The Queſtion now under Conſideration, being, Whether that Spirit of Chriſt,

which

which was *In* the Prophets, and to whoſe Teſtimony, our Lord Himſelf, when on Earth, did appeal (for the Demonſtration and Pointing out of Him, to be the Promiſed *Meſſiah*) might be ſometimes an Angel, or not? As to that part of the *Jews* Tradition, That *Moſes* by the clearneſs of Divine Manifeſtation to him, was excepted from all Interpoſition of an Angel, between him and the Ineffable Deity; we have had already Occaſion to ſhew, and have made it (as I conceive) apparent, that he was not ſo exempted. We now therefore proceed to the Enquiry, Whether it be repugnant to the Tenor of Scripture to allow, that the Spirit of Chriſt *In* the Prophets abovementioned, might be thro' the Inſtrumentality of an Angel, or not?

§ 59. For the more diſtinct Enquiry therefore, into this Matter, it is neceſſary to obſerve, That tho' the *Engliſh* renders, in moſt of them the Lord ſpake by the Prophets; yet in all the Places here under quoted, in this Paragraph, the Original *Hebrew* and the ancient Tranſlations thereof, have it, *In the Prophets*: Which, I think, is not unworthy of Obſervation, becauſe thereby, is more ſignificantly expreſſed, That the Inſpiration of the Prophets of Old, was as well internal in the Man (notwithſtanding the outward Signs of it on the Body viſible) as it is mention'd to be under the Goſpel Diſpenſation; and ſo a Harmony in the Manner of Inſpiration, both of the Old and New Teſtament, appears thereby the more clearly; for if our Lord ſaid, *Matth.* x. 20. *It is not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you*; and St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. xiii. 3. *Since ye ſeek a Proof of Chriſt ſpeaking* IN *me.* In Correſpondence therefore with the New Teſtament Inſpiration, we have it, *Habak.* ii. 1. *I will watch to ſee, what he will ſpeak* IN *me, and the Lord ſaid*, &c. Thus alſo it is, *Numb.* xii. 2. *Miriam and Aaron ſaid, hath the Lord indeed ſpoken only* IN *Moſes? Hath he not ſpoken alſo* IN *us?* Again, in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 2. ſays *David, the Spirit of the Lord ſpake* IN *me, and his Word was* IN *my Tongue.* So is that of *Hoſea* i. 2. *The Beginning of the Word of the Lord* IN *Hoſea:* So in *Jer.* v. 13. *The Prophets ſhall become Wind, and the Word is not* IN *them*: Chap. xxvii. 18. *If they be Prophets, and the Word of the Lord be with them*; [*Greek, Vulg. Lat.* and *Syriack,* IN *them*;] And in Agreement with theſe Declarations of the ſacred Text, St. *Paul* in *Heb.* i. 1. ſums up the Matter here

inſiſted on, that *God in divers Manners ſpake in Time paſt unto the Fathers,* εν τοις προφηταις, *IN the Prophets.*

§ 68. And now we come to the Queſtion, Whether when God ſpake *IN the Prophets,* or the Spirit of Chriſt *IN them* did teſtify or ſpeak, it might be immediately Himſelf, or Himſelf thro' the Interpoſition of an Angel; one or other, even poſſibly one of thoſe, that miniſter before his Throne, called the Spirits of God *(the Horns and Eyes of the Lamb)* ſent forth into the Earth? The meerly rational Man, no doubt, rejects both the mediate and immediate, as incomprehenſible to him, how God ſhou'd ever have ſpoken at all by the Mouth of a Man; but the Chriſtian admitting the Record of that Word, as once ſpoken by Him ſo, ought to be concluded by it, in this Point, as well as all others. To ſearch the Scripture therefore, which was always, and don't now ceaſe to be a laudable Courſe, ſince they were written in every Part of them, for ſuch our Inſtruction and Information, as touching the Manner of God revealing, we are ſure not to have, any where elſe. We find in the Six firſt Chapters of *Zechariah* theſe Words, *The Angel that talked with me,* are repeated Eleven Times: In all which Places the *Hebrew* has it, *the Angel that ſpoke in me,* and the *Greek, Latin, Syriack,* and *Arab.* ſo tranſlate it here: In divers of which Places, the Angel ſpeaking in him, commiſſionates the Prophet to ſpeak in the Name of God; and particularly *Chap.* i. 16. to ſay, *Thus ſaith the Lord, I am returned to Jeruſalem with Mercies, my Houſe ſhall be built in it,* &c. But ſince I am aware, that ſome ſophiſtical Men, may, by a ſubtle Turn of Logick, think to make void the obvious Senſe of theſe Words, by aſſerting, that the Angel could not ſpeak in him, becauſe 'tis added, *Chap.* ii. 3. that the ſame Angel went forth. Now without entring into a Philoſophical Diſſertation, touching the Manner of Spirits Agency, and which in Truth is out of the Bounds of that, and all other human Sciences, I think we may venture to ſay, That, as the inviſible Eſſence of an Angel is not circumſcribed in Viſion, by any human or other Form, that he preſents before the Prophet; ſo neither is it neceſſary, that his Eſſence ſhould be confined within the Body of *Zechariah,* when he ſpoke in him; but at the ſame Time, that the Angel by one Exertion of himſelf, ſpake in the Prophet, or cauſed the human Organs to form Speech, he could by another Act of it, repreſent a human Form *going forth,* as the Text aſſerts; and this

this is much eaſier to conceive, than how one evil Spirit actuated 400 *Ahab*'s Prophets. As therefore, I ſuppoſe, all Divines will abhor the Thought, of the Eſſence of Chriſt inherent in St. *Paul*, when it is ſaid, Chriſt ſpoke in him, ſo neither is it neceſſary, for that of an Angel, to be confined within *Zechariah*, in like Caſe.

§ 61. Henceforth then, to take no Notice of vain Philoſophy, touching Matters that are above it, and to build wholly on the plain Text of what is written in *Heb.* ii. 2. we are told, that *the Word ſpoken by Angels was ſtedfaſt*, which whether it ought to mean only that ſpoken on Mount *Sinai*, as is commonly underſtood, I leave to further Conſideration: But taking it here to refer to That, and that being the brighteſt Vouchſafement of God to *Moſes*, or rather extending it to all the Manifeſtations of God, unto the ſame moſt diſtinguiſhed Perſon among the Prophets: Whichſoever of theſe two Ways we underſtand it, the Inference from thence will plainly and equally follow, that, if he who excelled in the Clearneſs of Divine Manifeſtation, had the Word of God from the Utterance of Angels, it can be no leſſening of the Stedfaſtneſs of it, tho' the Prophets alſo had it ſo too. That *Deborah* was a Propheteſs, and that her Song proceeded from the Spirit of Prophecy, never came under Queſtion, yet ſhe in the midſt of it interpoſeth, *Judg.* v. 23. *Said the Angel of the Lord*: And here the Critical Annotators remark, "That in "thoſe Words is imply'd, that the Angel then ſpoke by "her: And (ſay they) tho' the whole Song be dictated by "the Spirit of Prophecy; yet leſt any one ſhould ſur"miſe, that howbeit the Senſe and Import of it, came "from God, the Clauſe touching the curſing of *Meroz*, "was a Mixture ſuggeſted from the Paſſion and Words "of the Poeteſs under Inſpiration; the Parentheſis of, *Said* "*the Angel of the Lord*, affirms, that all the Words and "Things concerning *Meroz*, were as well divinely inſpired, "as the reſt; ſo that the Import of this Clauſe, amounts "to an Appeal, that whoſoever ſhould hereafter, be inſpi"red by the Spirit of God, would with her, pronounce "*Meroz* accurſed, and *Jael* (for her Fact there celebrated) "*bleſſed above Women.*"

§ 62. *Numb.* xxii. 20. *God came unto Balaam at Night, and ſaid, the Word that I ſhall ſay unto thee, that ſhalt thou do*: Yet concerning this Commiſſion from Heaven, we

read in the 35th Verſe, *the Angel of the Lord ſaid unto Balaam, only the Word which I ſhall ſpeak unto thee,* [*Chald.* with thee,] *that thou ſhalt ſpeak:* Wherefore, when the *Spirit of God came upon him,* Chap. xxiv. and he utter'd that noble Prophecy there contained; it ſeems plain from this collating of the Text, that the ſame was an Inſpiration of the Almighty, by that Angel; and this Obſervation may ſerve to explain to us, how Prophetick Inſpiration does not precedently require a Perſon ſanctified, nor neceſſarily produce Sanctification in the Effect on him. And ſeeing the Devil had Power in Paradice, to open the Mouth of the Serpent, and put a human Voice into it, why ſhould there be Difficulty to allow, that an Angel of Light open'd the Mouth of the Aſs, here? As to the Term uſed above, that *the Spirit of God came upon Balaam* in that Prophecy, the Expreſſion will eaſily appear to comport with the Character of an Angel, if Men will pleaſe to conſider the like Term uſed, touching the Angels that tranſported *Philip and Elias*, called ſeverally, *the Spirit of the Lord.*

§ 63. The moſt ordinary Term, whereby the Inſpiration of the Prophets is ſignified, we find in the Old Teſtament to be, *The Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, Hoſea*, &c. and not knowing particularly to what Manner or Way of Revelation, ſo well as to the human Voice, moved by a Power inſpiring, to place and aſcribe that Term. On that Foot, we will here read, 1 *Kings* xiii. 17, 18. *A Word was ſaid to me, by the Word of the Lord, thou ſhalt eat no Bread*; unto which the Impoſtor of *Bethel* anſwer'd, *I am a Prophet alſo as thou art, and an Angel ſpake unto me, by the Word of the Lord, ſaying, bring him back.* Now if the true Prophet could have doubted of, or diſallow'd, that an Angel could ſpeak by the Word of the Lord, or that the Claim of it in that Way, was not of equal Authority with the Divine Oracle ſpeaking to himſelf, he then could never have been deceiv'd by it. Another pretty frequent and very proper Definition of Prophecy is, to *ſpeak in the Name of the Lord*; and *David*, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 19, obeys the Word which *Gad* ſpake in the Name of the Lord; and as by the preceding Verſe it appears, the Prophet had that Command from the Angel of the Lord, without mention of Viſion; we leave it to Conſideration, whether his receiving it from the Angel, or his Delivery to *David* in the Name of the Lord, might not either the one or the other be alſo by Angelick Inſpiration.

§ 64. Thus

§ 64. Thus when the *Angel of the Lord* ſaid to *Elias*, *Go up and meet the Meſſengers of the King, and ſay unto them*, 2 Kings ii. 3, 4. [the *Arab.* has it, propheſy unto them, ſaying,] *thus ſaith the Lord*; and *Elias* did ſo, by this Commiſſion. In the 15th Verſe, the Angel of the Lord, ſaid to *Elias* again, *Go down*: Herein (ſay the Commentators) *the Angel ſpake to the Prophet*, either by internal Inſpiration, or by Aparition, tho' not viſible to thoſe preſent: Wherefore by Concurrence of ſome among the Learned, there is no Injury done to the Character of this diſtinguiſhed Prophet, to allow, that he ſpake by Angelick Inſpiration. After the ſame ſort, *the Spirit* that *entred into him*, when God ſpake to *Ezekiel*, Chap. ii. 2. is by the Verſes preceding, confirmed to be an Angel, as alſo by the Words annexed, *he ſet me upon my Feet*, that is, as in *Daniel*, he commanded me to ſtand up: Thus (ſay the Learned) the Holy Spirit enters into thoſe, that hear the *Word* of God *revealing*; the ſame Prophet in the next Chapter, tells us Verſe 24. the Spirit (as above) enter'd again into him, and ſpake with him, which in Verſe 22. is expreſſed by, *the Hand of the Lord was there upon him*; [*Chald.* the Spirit of Prophecy from the Preſence of the Lord, reſted on him;] and as the ſame Expreſſion occurs alſo in the 14th Verſe, let us hear the Commentators upon it; "The Prophet here (ſay they) in "his own perſonal Will, was reluctant, and had not yielded, but as impelled by the ſtrong Hand of the Lord "upon him; that is, the great Power of the Spirit inſpiring: Thus was he conſtrained and enforced by that "ſecret Impulſe of the Spirit, not to give Way to his own "Thoughts and Deſires as a Man, but in Obedience to "the Commands of God, to quench and ſuppreſs his human Affections; the Hand of the Lord here means, "the prophetick Spirit vehemently and efficaciouſly urging him; as therefore, from the Context, the Spirit ſo impelling appears to be an Angel, it follows that the Inſpiration attending, was the Dictate and Influence of an Angel.

§ 65. According to the Definition here given us of the prophetick Spirit's Operation by the very Learned, and to ſhew the Conſentaniouſneſs of its acting, at all Times whether of the Old or New Teſtament Diſpenſation; I muſt beg leave to add alſo very largely their Explanation, of 2 *Pet.* i. 20, 21. which by the *Engliſh* ſtands thus; *No Prophecy of the Scripture, is of any private Interpretation,*

for

for Prophecy came not in old Time [*Margin*, or at any Time,] *by the Will of Man, but holy Men of God spake, moved by the Holy Spirit*; in which Text (say they) " the Question is " not, about, who has Right to interpret Scripture Prophe- " cy, but by what Authority, Impulse or Commission, the " Prophets dared to give forth their Prophecies; for the " Word Επιλυσις, (rendred *Interpretation*) means the Im- " pulse, or extraordinary Inspiration of the Spirit: In the " New Testament indeed, the Word Prophecy means some- " times Interpretation; but then the Interpretation in this " Text excludes a private Authority, that is, it cannot be " performed by a Literal Solution: Therefore, the Apo- " stle admonishes, that they should not think, by their " own Abilities, to expound the Prophetick Writings " touching Christ; forasmuch as they are a Light shining " in a dark Place; that is, wrapt about with Obscurities: " And here, *private Interpretation*, does not stand distin- " guished from, and opposed to, any common, or publick " Interpretation, but stands as a Distinction between the " adventitious Gift of the Holy Spirit, (prophetically,) and " the natural Abilities of Man: Wherefore the Apostle " exhorts Men, to seek Interpretation from God, and so " the Interpretation here meant is, the Prophetick Reve- " lation explicatory of the Divine Will, as the Prophets " were Interpreters of it; so that Επιλυσις, *Interpretati- " on here*, being an Agonistical Term, alluding to Men " starting or setting forth on a Race, is no other, than the " Commission, or sending forth of the Prophet to prophe- " sy, by the Power, and Impulsion or Motion, whereby " the Prophet was impelled to Utterance; as in *Luke* xxi. " 15. *I will give you a Mouth*, and *Eph.* vi. 19. *that Utterance* " *may be given me*, that I may open my Mouth boldly; " or as the Word of the Lord came unto the Prophets, " particularly *Ezek.* iii. 15. for Prophecy *came* (ηνεχθη, " lately was, or is brought, that is, from Heaven) not by " the Will of Man, at any time (past, present, or to come) " where, that is, in this Text, Prophecy means the Pro- " phetick Utterance, or Fuction of Prophesying, for the " solving or declaring Divine Secrets; but this was, or is " done (says the Text) by Persons (φερομενοι, acted, inspi- " red, or under Extacy, when they were, or are driven, " agitated, or impelled) *moved* by the Holy Spirit, as it is " expressed to do, upon *Sampson*, Judg. xiii. 25. for, those " Things are in *Greek* said to be φερομενα, that are carried " and moved with a Violence and Force." Now, upon this large

large Definition of the Modus of propheſying, we may obſerve that the Divines have illuſtrated it by that in *Ezek.* iii. 16. Whoever then will take the Pains to read the whole Chapter, will find that the Book eaten by him in the Beginning of it (and which is commonly receiv'd to be an Emblem of his Propheſying) was preſented him by an Angel; and in the latter End, the Hand of the Lord or Spirit of Prophecy upon him, was by an Angel or Spirit, (that entred into him and commanded him to ſtand upon his Feet,) wherefore the Word of the Lord coming to him in the 16th Verſe, does not appear to have any other Authority, than what was conveyed by an Angel, in the preceding and ſubſequent Parts of that Chapter; and in 2 *Pet.* i. 2. the Word ἠνέχθη, *was, or is brought*, applied to Prophecy, does (I think) properly imply a Meſſenger, or Angel.

§ 66. Upon what has been above ſaid, we ſee that the internal Spring or Cauſe, cauſing a Man to propheſy; was joined with outward Symptoms, of that Cauſe, efficaciouſly cauſing; the Former, powerfully infuſed by a ſupernatural Agent, was ſecretly the Prophet's own Commiſſion and full Aſſurance; and the outward Symptoms of that Agency, were the Spectators moral Demonſtration, of his extraordinary State; and which put them upon a neceſſary Scrutiny, whether that ſupernatural Mover, was an evil or good Spirit. Seeing alſo that Divine Inſpiration by Angelick Influence, is under the Old Teſtament no ſtrange Doctrine, and St. *Peter* ſays, that the holy Men of God, always of old ſpake, as they were moved by the holy Spirit, and at any Time did, and ever would do ſo; thus far it is certain, that the holy Spirit ſo ſpeaking in them, ſtood abſolutely diſtinguiſhed from the evil Spirit; but that it ſtood diſtinguiſhed, from Angelick Influence in ſpeaking, That by no Means can be allowed, without ſeveral poſitive Exceptions already quoted in the Old Teſtament: And now we proceed to enquire, whether the holy Spirit ſpeaking prophetically (as above deſcribed) did under the New Teſtament neceſſarily exclude all Inſtrumentality in Angels, whilſt the Chriſtian Prophet ſo ſpake the Word of God, and not of Men.

§ 67. It may juſtly be doubted, whether Viſion be not always preſented, thro' the Miniſtry of Angels, and from the Scripture there is no Way of Revelation more ſacred than that; and Viſion, as already hinted, being often uſed, a Term

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ſynonimous with that of Prophecy, inſomuch that divers entire Books of Prophecy, are entitled the Viſions of ſuch and ſuch; it follows, that the Angel who gave the Viſion, did communicate or miniſter alſo Prophecy with it; and of this we have a celebrated Inſtance, in the firſt Words of the *Apocalypſe*, where 'tis declar'd, That God ſent and ſignified the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt to *John*, *by his Angel*, and in the 3d Verſe, it is added, *Bleſſed are they that hear and keep the Words of this Prophecy*: Now the Book of this Prophecy, being again in the Cloſe of it, *Chap.* xxii. 7, 8. aſcribed to the Miniſtration of an Angel, and it containing Exhortations, Promiſes, and Denunciations, as well as any other of the Prophetick Writings; then it is plain in this Caſe, that the Angel did authorize *John* to Propheſy, by teſtifying, or bearing forth unto Men, the Contents of what he had ſo received from the Angel. And yet this Book is of equal Authority, with any other in the New Teſtament, and the whole Revelation in it, *Chap.* i. 3. is expreſly call'd, the *Word of God*, and the Teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt; and *Chap.* xxii. 16. it is ſaid, *I Jeſus have ſent mine Angel, to teſtify unto you theſe Things in the Churches.*

§ 68. *The Teſtimony of Jeſus is the Spirit of Prophecy*, Rev. xix. 10. are Words of an Angel to St. *John*, which if we take them in a Senſe, reſtricted to the Occaſion particular of expreſſing them; then the Meaning they convey, is, ſay the Learned, "*the Teſtimony of Jeſus* is one and the ſame "thing, and of equal Dignity, with *the Spirit of Prophecy*; "therefore ſays the Angel to *John*, I am thy Fellow-Ser- "vant; (to Chriſt;) I and thou then are equal in this Mi- "niſtry of Jeſus Chriſt; neither does the Honour of theſe "Relations belong to me, but to Chriſt alone, who gave the "Teſtimony; that is, revealed the ſecret eternal Councils of "his Father, and from whom I receiv'd them, that I might "make them known unto thee, and that thou mighteſt "teſtify, and declare them to the Church. Thus the Book "of the *Apocalypſe*, here called in particular, *the Teſtimony "of Jeſus*, came forth from Chriſt, adminiſtred by the Pro- "phetick Spirit, *in the Hand or Miniſtry of an Angel*; and "the *Spirit of Prophecy* who is in thee, as well as in other "Prophets, and by whom thou teſtifyeſt of Chriſt, *is the "Teſtimony*, or open Declaration *of Jeſus*: Or the Spirit "of Prophecy given unto thee, is the Evidence, whereby "Jeſus ſhews thee, to be his Ambaſſador, or Meſſenger "Prophetick (*in the Churches, Rev.* xxii. 16.)

§ 69. Our

§ 69. Our great God, and King, to whom all Angels are ſubject, and by him (Chriſt) ſent forth into the Earth, is juſtly entitled to all the Glory; and therefore, St. *John* was warned, to look beyond the Angel; to pay his Adoration, where only due. But having here, the Concurrence of Literate Interpreters, that the Prophetick Spirit acted upon St. *John*, by the Hand or Inſtrumentality of an Angel; we will not intrude further, into the myſterious Ways of Divine Operation in Prophecy, than the Text aſſerts; and whether the Angelick Spirit (appearing before the Apoſtle) might not any Time affect him to ſpeak, during that Viſion, as has already apear'd an Angel did amply, in *Zachariah*, and in *Ezekiel* ſometimes, I leave to the Conſideration of thoſe, who will collate the Circumſtances of each Text ſeverally. But it being plain, that the Spirit of Prophecy acted upon St. *John* by an Angel, we find that all other Prophets of the New Teſtament, are ſubjected to the like Manner of Divine Operation; for ſays the Angel, I am (not only) a fellow Servant of thee, but of thy Brethren, that *have* the ſame Teſtimony of Jeſus, the Spirit of Prophecy upon them; and if in *Ezekiel*, the Book he had from an Angel, and eaten up by him, was an Emblem of the Gift of Prophecy poured on him, *Chap.* iii. 3. The ſame Deſcription we have of the Manner, wherein Prophecy is conveyed, *Rev.* x. 9--11. repreſented by the Apoſtles taking a little Book from an Angel, and eating it up: *Jeremiah* in like Caſe, that is, ſpeaking of his Commiſſion to Prophecy, ſays, *Chap.* xv. 16. *thy Words were found and I did eat them, and thy Word was*, &c. Correſpondent with theſe two Inſtances of *Ezekiel* and *Jeremiah*, ſay the Commentators, "when the Angel ſaid to *John*, *take this little Book and eat* "*it up*; the Apoſtle by that Delivery and eating it, is "endowed with the Power of propheſying, for the Book "was ſymbolical of Prophecy; the Angel ſo ſaying and de"livering, repreſented Chriſt; and as the Angel adds, thou "muſt propheſy again, before many Peoples, and Nations, "and Kings, it ſignifies, that tho' he had propheſied before, "he had now a Commiſſion further to do ſo; and *John* is "commanded this, not ſo much reſpecting his own Per"ſon, as therein, then repreſenting, the Perſon of all other "Prophets; and the Senſe implies alſo, that Prophecy "ſhould be renewed and reſtored, in the latter Days, a"gainſt *Antichriſt*." From all which duly conſidered, who can any more doubt, that the Inſtrumentality of an Angel,

gel, was consistent with Christian Inspiration to prophesy in the Apostolick Times, as well as it has manifestly appear'd in Fact upon the Prophets under the Old Testament, and is still to come, just before the Destruction of *Babylon*, when the Angel entrusted with it, *shall preach the Gospel to every Nation on the Earth*, *Rev.* xiv. 6.

§ 70. Wherefore, upon the premised Assertions in the New Testament, that do plainly include, that Christian prophetick Inspiration, was not, nor is incompatible with the mediate Agency of an Angel in it; I must again resume the Observation, that all the antient Versions of the *Polyglotte*, which are (above others of most Esteem in the Christian World) and divers of the most authentick Manuscripts and Editions of the *Greek* Text, do give us that in *Rev.* xxii. 6. thus; *the Lord God of the Spirits of the Holy Prophets, hath sent his Angel.* I am not pleading to introduce any Addition to the Original Words of that sacred Prophecy; but since Dr. *Mills* has observ'd, that the Opposers of *Montanism* did so universally prevail, to decry the Book of the *Revelations* of St. *John*; that tho' the Inspiration of it was never doubted in the Second Century, yet afterwards it was so much laid by, that it was not by any publick Authority (as he could find) put with the rest of the Canon of the New Testament, in the *Eastern* or *Greek* Church, till after the Year 800. This long Suppression of it, no doubt gave an Occasion for more easily corrupting it, before restored; and the Variation of the Text under Debate, being much more liable to a Corruption, by leaving out the Word SPIRITS (from the general Prejudice of Men embibed against their Influence) than by adding it; we may, I think, rationally conclude, that the Word was in the Original Copy of St. *John*'s *Revelations*, and then it as another Proof from it, follows, that the inscrutable Deity did sometimes in his *Revelations* to the Prophets, use the Instrumentality of Heavenly Agents, for Prophecy. Neither does this disagree with the Rule given in general by the same Apostle, 1 *John* iv. 1. *to try the Spirits whether they are of God, because many false Prophets* were *gone out into the World*; for as that Text supposes the Prophet to be acted by a Spirit extraordinarily, so the Injunction to *try those Spirits*, and not to believe *every Spirit*, seems, to imply the Agency of many, whether on the true or on the false Prophet. Moreover in the Epistles of St. *Paul*, we find sometimes a Distinction between the Spirit of God, and *the Spirit which is of, or from God,*

as

as the ſame is explained by *Hermas*, Part II. Chap. 2. §. 16–19. here under.

§ 71. As to that in 1 *Cor.* xiv. 12. *Foraſmuch as ye are zealous of SPIRITS*, ſome may imagine perhaps that the Subſiſting of the Word, *Spirits*, there, is dubious alſo, as well as the Subſiſtence of it, *Rev.* xxii. 6. above-mention'd: But the contrary is moſt manifeſt, from the accurate Remarks of Dr. *Mills*, touching the Variations in the *Greek* Text; for in this latter Scripture of St. *Paul*, there is an univerſal Concurrence, except of one ſingle Author, *Ruffinus*, the known Corrupter of *Origen*'s Works, who has cited it *Spirituals* inſtead of *Spirits*. If then Men will be pleas'd to obſerve this Text, and compare it with Verſe 1. and 3. they will readily gather, that to deſire the edifying Gift of Prophecy, is ſo connected with the Deſire of Spirits, as if the one was not to be enjoyed without the other; which ſtrongly proves, that Prophetick Inſpiration was not incompatible with the Agency intermediate of Angels, in it, under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation: And upon all this Evidence out of the New Teſtament, I refer it to every Man to give a better Reaſon of the ſame Apoſtle's Direction (for the Peculiarity of) *Women propheſying* in publick, to be cover'd, 1 *Cor.* xi. 5, 10. *becauſe of the Angels*, than that they were in that Function of Propheſying, moved by Angels.

§ 72. There is indeed one Scripture, that ſeems to be repugnant to this Inſtrumentality of Angels, in Prophetick Inſpiration under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, and that is, *Epheſ.* iii. 10. where it is ſaid, that *the manifold Wiſdom of God was made known by the Church, unto Principalities and Powers, in Heavenlies.* Now, Earthly Potentates are ſometimes termed Principalities and Powers, and to them the Wiſdom of God in Heavenly Things, was doubtleſs made known at length by the Church: But if Principalities and Powers, be underſtood to mean Angelick Spirits good or evil; then whoever will look into the critical State of that Text in the *Greek*, may find more reaſon to believe, that the Wiſdom of God made known to them by the Church, refers to his manifold wiſe Diſpoſals concerning it, from the beginning of the World, (iſſuing in the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, and thereby made plain) rather than to Prophetical Preaching. And there are ſo many Difficulties, among the Learned, how to underſtand that Text, that without further entangling of this Argument, by offering at the ſolving of them,

them, it ſuffices here to conclude, that the ſame is no clear Oppoſition to what we have already advanced, touching the Agency of Angels in Divine Inſpiration.

§ 73. Thus far has been ſpoken touching Prophecy ſpecial, or what more properly is ſo: And it appears, that as a Spirit extraordinarily did affect the Prophet in it; ſo he gave outward Atteſtations of that his ſuper-operating, either by Trances, figurative Signs, and other Actions extravagant, whereby Men might have a rational moral Proof, of the Prophet's ſpeaking, not as another Man: We have ſhew'd alſo, that this ſuperior viſible Agency, was ſometimes throughout the Scripture, exerted by the Father of Spirits, thro' the Inſtrumentality of an Angel, as well as in the other Ways of Divine Revelation, Viſion, Dream, and Heavenly Voice heard: And I think, that whenever the infinite Deity is pleas'd to ſignify any thing of his Will, or Council unto Men, it is very happy for Mankind, to have theſe outward Denotations, that the Prophet does not ſpeak in the Manner of other Men; for when a Man ſpeaks, being violently actuated or moved by the Holy Spirit, there is much more reaſon to believe, that his ſo propheſying, cometh not of his own Will; than if we ſuppoſed a Man to propheſy, or be divinely inſpired, without any outward Appearance upon him, more than is common to all. But however this be, as to Reaſonableſs, what I have entirely built upon, for the Knowledge of the Ways of God revealing, is, that thus and thus, *it is written*: And if it were poſſible that Chriſtians ſhould all with one Conſent, run into Definitions of Prophetick Inſpiration, that were built wholly upon internal Operations, and ſecret Illumination of the Mind, without any ſort of outward Evidence of a ſuperior Agent, more than other good Men, I would rather adhere to Scriptural Definitions of it, than theirs; for as to that internal and ſecret Illumination, I doubt not, but the Scripture Prophets did commonly feel and experience the ſame, during, and under the moſt wild and extravagant of all their outward Deportments, and Violence of Emotion preternatural, as has been already noted.

§ 74. Having now gone thro' theſe ſeveral Circumſtances, of Extacy, figurative Signs and extraordinary Motions, which the Scripture largely repreſents, to have attended the Eſtate and Manner of prophetick Inſpiration; and having evinced from every one of thoſe Heads, that there

was

was rational and moral Evidence by ſomething ſeen of a ſuperior diſtinct Agent, moving and affecting the Propher, coincidently with his Inſpirations; having alſo proved abundantly, that the Divine Operation on him, is frequently teſtified in holy Writ, to have been by the intermediate Power of an Angel. It is to be lamented, that moſt of theſe Things are univerſally overlooked, and even become as unknown, as if they were not at all written in the Text; but on the contrary, theſe Teſtimonies of the Manner of the prophetick Spirit, are made void by the general Opinion, that theſe Circumſtances are even foreign to the holy Spitit of Prophecy, and only belong to an evil One. Upon which Ignorance and Preſumption, Men have now (almoſt without Controul, except among the moſt Learned) adapted ſuch Conceptions of Inſpiration properly Prophetick, as if it never conſiſted in any thing elſe, than a ſecret Illumination of the Mind; ſo that the indulged Omiſſion, to conſider the Circumſtances above deſcribed, being duly weighed; we cannot ſee, with what Juſtice, thoſe that have built up, and warranted; the aforeſaid Syſtem of ſecret Illumination, can upbraid ſuch, who find in themſelves that Illumination, for believing and acting as having receiv'd the Gift of Prophecy, for Edification, Exhortation and Comfort of the Church; and that without any outward Evidences, other than thoſe, which conſtantly attend a real Sanctification.

§ 75. It were to be wiſhed indeed, for the Benefit of all, that there was more of mutual Exhortation, and Edification of Faith, and Communion of Graces, exerciſed among Chriſtians, one with another, where ever they meet together; but having already declared, that I am in this Subject confined, to Inſpiration meerly Prophetick; which (I think) is always in the Scripture ſignified, to be attended with ſome outward Manifeſtations, of a Spirit ſuperior to the Man's, tho' never ſo holy and blameleſs a Perſon. I ſhall now cloſe the preſent Enquiry, with the Obſervation, that there is another Circumſtance, often in the holy Text mention'd to attend the Prophet, which to himſelf muſt alſo confirm his Miſſion, beyond doubt; which becauſe it does not admit of ſuch outward Evidence, as the former ones above mention'd, I ſhall inſiſt on it very briefly: But as the written Word aſſerts it, and the Generality of Men do however deny the Thing; and ſeeing it concerns the Manner of Divine Utterance, to Men by the Prophet,

ſomewhat here muſt be added, touching that Matter; *which is, that the Words as well as the Senſe, of what was ſpoken by the Prophet, in the tremendous Name of God, were dictated by the Divine Power, on him.* Now therefore, as to this Point, the Holy Record being Judge, I can't conceive, how all Scripture ſhould be given by Inſpiration of God, unleſs the Words literally thereof were ſo too: And if the Numerical Words were inſpired, there is Proof from the Letter of them, in *Jeremiah*, and *Paul*'s Epiſtles, that thoſe Words were inſpired, in the Mouth of a Perſon ſpeaking, different from him, by whom they were written.

§ 76. As to Men ſpeaking, whilſt they were moved by the Holy Spirit, whether the Words, or the Senſe only without them, were inſpired by Him who formed Man's Mouth, I ſubmit to Conſideration, upon the Authority of the Texts following, tho' abundantly more may be added, of like kind. When the Lord gave to *Moſes*, his Commiſſion to go into *Ægypt*, He ſaid, *Exod.* iv. 12. *I will be with thy Mouth*; where the *Greek* is, *I will open thy Mouth*; Chald. *I will put my Word in thy Mouth*; Vulg. Lat. *I will be in thy Mouth.* But becauſe for the Reaſon above-cited, I purpoſe much Brevity on this Head, henceforth we will reſt contented with the *Engliſh* Text; for as the Caſe does not admit outward Evidence, we muſt ſit down with the Declarations of the Prophet himſelf: But if the laſt Words of the Kingly Prophet, on his Death-bed, may be credited, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 2. he ſays, *The Spirit of the Lord ſpake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue*: And if the Expoſition of that Sentence may be left to the more learned, they tell us, the Meaning of it is, "*David* affirms thus; The "Holy Spirit ſpake the Pſalms by me; they are his "Words, not mine. Wherefore not only the inward In-"fuſion of the Senſe is aſcribed to the Holy Spirit, but "alſo (ſay they) the literal Words." In like Manner, where *Deborah*, in her Prophetick Song, *Judg.* v. 23. interpoſes in a Parentheſis, *ſaid the Angel of the Lord*, the ſame Expoſiters add, that the Propheteſs therein aſſerts, that the Angel who ſpake thro' her, dictated and formed the very Words themſelves, and not only the Senſe of them.

§ 77. In ordinary Arguments, or common Writings, an Aptitude of Expreſſion is a Felicity ſo peculiar, that Men of good Senſe often want it; therefore in the Prophecy of *Agur*, allowing the Truth of his own Aſſertion, *Prov.* xxx.

2. *Sure-*

2. *Surely I am more brutiſh than any Man, and have not the Underſtanding of a Man*, we cannot rationally imagine, he was left to his natural Powers, to word his Inſpiration. And thus *Canticles* vii. 9. the Spirit's cauſing *the Lips of thoſe that are aſleep to ſpeak*, can never conſiſt with the Exerciſe of the natural Faculties. In like Manner, when under the Spirit of Prophecy, Men ſpeak Tongues unknown to themſelves, and could not interpret them, as the Caſe ſometimes was, 1 *Cor.* xiv. there, if the Senſe only were infuſed to their Underſtandings (tho' even that do not appear) how is it poſſible that the Words ſhould be formed by themſelves? Therefore, as in another Place we find it expreſſed, I take it to be very plain, that the Spirit *gave them Utterance directly Himſelf*, as the ſame ſtands diſtinguiſhed, from the mediate Way of conveying Light into the Mind, by which the Prophet himſelf was to dictate the Words.

§ 78. But further; there are divers Places, wherein the moſt obvious Senſe of the Words in Scripture (which ought to be preferr'd to one more remote, if the Context allow) does import that the very Words of the Inſpired Perſon, were dictated by the ſuperior Agent, and not by himſelf; as thoſe ſpoken to *Ezekiel*, carry it, *Chap.* ii. 7. *Thou ſhalt ſpeak my Words unto them*; and again, *Chap.* iii. 4. *Go, get thee to the Houſe of Iſrael, and ſpeak with my Words unto them:* And that remarkable Prophecy touching the Redeemer coming to *Zion*, ſeems very plain to the ſame Purpoſe, *Iſa.* lix. 21. *This is my Covenant with them, ſaith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee, (Iſrael,) and my Words which I have put in thy Mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seeds Seed, from henceforth, and for ever.* And what can we underſtand from the obvious Words of the Text, to be meant, rather or preferably to, ſome preternatural Impreſſion on the Faculty of Speech, where we find by *Iſa.* vi. 7. one of the Seraphims (ſeen in Viſion) flew with a live Coal in his Hand, and laid it upon the *Prophet's Mouth*? For in the Deſcription, that *Jeremiah* gives of the Manner, wherein his Prophetick Commiſſion was ſealed to him, he tells us, *the Lord put forth his Hand, and touched my Mouth: And the Lord ſaid unto me, behold, I have put my Words in thy Mouth.* Upon which latter Text the Commentators ſay, "that the "Lord touched his Mouth by an Angel, as that of *Iſaiah* "precedently; to the End that by this External Sign, as

" by a Sacramental Seal and Command, he might conſti-
" tute and eſtabliſh *Jeremiah* a Prophet; or that he might
" openly demonſtrate, *that Mouth* (ſo touched) was dedica-
" ted unto him; by this Touch, as it were, opening and
" unlocking his Mouth to propheſy freely; and at the
" ſame Time, admoniſhing *Jeremiah*, that the Words he
" was to utter, were not to be his own, but the Words of
" God, put into his Mouth."

§ 79. Indeed if Men are reſolved, right or wrong, to wrangle about every thing that concerns the Prophet's Commiſſion; the Scripture it ſelf is but a dead Letter, and the Opinions of the Learned on it are alterable at Pleaſure: And upon one or the other of theſe, REASON it ſelf, (that Darling of Man in other Points) ſhall be bound Neck and Heels, rather than be ſuffer'd a Liberty to exert it ſelf, in behalf of Prophetick Inſpiration. But to purſue the Track of the Divine Oracle, our only Maſter in theſe Things tells us, *I will give you a Mouth*, Luke xxi. 15. and St. *Paul* thanked *God always, for the Grace, whereby the Corinthians* (i. 5.) *were enriched by him, in all Utterance* diſtinct from inſpired Knowledge, and beſeeches the Prayers of others, that freſh Supplies of that Grace, might iſſue to him, *Eph.* vi. 19. that *Utterance might be given him*: Wherefore, let Sophiſtry take its Courſe, it does ſuffice that the ſole Maſter of the Houſhold of Faith tells us, this Utterance of the Prophetick Preacher, muſt be without taking any Thought, of the Method how, or the Matter what, he ſhall ſpeak; for *Mat.* x. 19, 20. *It ſhall be given you in that ſame Hour what ye ſhall ſpeak, for it is not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father which ſpeaketh in you.* If the Spirit ſpeaketh, and not the Man, then the Words are the Spirit's, and not the Man's: Therefore, with great Demonſtration of Reaſon do the Commentators affirm the Meaning of this latter Text to be; " That the Divine Spirit furniſhes as
" well Speech to the Mouth, as Wiſdom to the Mind, for
" (ſay they, on *John* xi. 51.) *Caiaphas* ſpake, not of himſelf,
" when he propheſied, that is, not from his Will or Know-
" ledge, what he ſhould ſay; but the Words were put in-
" to his Mouth, as into that of *Balaam*'s Aſs, and not into
" his Mind; and however incongruous this be, with re-
" ſpect to human Reaſoning, yet in Reſpect to Propheſy-
" ing, it is true.

§ 80. But

§ 80. But having thus, very briefly, touched upon the Prophet's Inſpiration, wherein the Words as well as the Senſe, and even ſometimes the former without the latter, were dictated by the Spirit of Prophecy; tho' I cannot affirm, from Scripture, that it was never otherwiſe; and having paſſed thro' the Examination of the moſt uſual outward viſible Evidences of a Spirit acting on him, in Extacies, Figurative Signs, and other Actions unaccountable for, but from that predominating Influence of the Spirit; we ſhall now, from theſe Scripture Obſervations, proceed to enquire, what Teſtimonies there are of the Prophetical Spirit's Operations, to be found in human Records, ſince the Date of the Divine.

THE

THE SPIRIT of PROPHECY DEFENDED, &c.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

Of PROPHECY *uncontroverted, in the* FIRST CENTURY.

§ 1. HAVING at large treated in the firſt Part, touching the various Manners, wherein God reveal'd Himſelf to the Prophets, and by them ſpake unto Mankind; what followeth in this Part, is to contain an Hiſtorical Account of the Extraordinary Preſence of CHRIST with his Church, eſpouſed to Him, as her Lord and Husband, and ruling Head, in all Things: So that the Prophetick Spirit preſiding therein as his Vicegerent, was under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, inſtead of the Spirit of *Jehovah* in the Old Teſtament. This latter alſo by St. *Peter* is called, *the Spirit of Chriſt*, which determines the one and the other to be the ſame Spirit. And ſo great was the Effuſion of

that Spirit, not only upon the Day of *Pentecoſt*, wherein the whole Hundred and Twenty, both Men and Women partook of it, and who *ſpake the wonderful Works of God, as the Spirit gave them Utterance*; which is an expreſs and proper Definition of Propheſying; but *when the Auditors were pricked in their Hearts*, St. *Peter* adds, *Be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, and ye ſhall receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit, for the Promiſe* (of it) *is unto you, and to your Children, and to all, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* Therefore, of the Three Thouſand added to the Church, at that Time, the Gift of the Holy Spirit extraordinarily then promiſed, no doubt accompanied their enſuing Baptiſm, if not to all, at leaſt as many of them, as the Lord thought fit ſo to call to the Prophetick Office; for we cannot otherwiſe conceive the Words of the Apoſtle to have due Effect.

§ 2. Thus in the Fourth Chapter of the *Acts*, (to obſerve further the vaſt Effuſion of the Spirit on the new-born Church) after the further Addition of Five Thouſand more, when we may well ſuppoſe the Number of Believers aſſembled together Verſe 31, were more numerous than the former Aſſembly; the Place was ſhaken, and they were *all filled with the Holy Spirit, and ſpake the Word of God with Boldneſs*; which alſo implies Prophecy. Again, in the Eighth Chapter, when a great Number both of *Men and Women*, believ'd at *Samaria*, the Apoſtles prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit; and when theſe laid their Hands on them, the Holy Spirit was given, and they did receive it, which doubtleſs makes a further Addition of Prophets. Afterwards in the Tenth Chapter, where *Cornelius* had called together his Kindred and near Friends, and they with the Family were aſſembled to hear *Peter*, Verſe 44. *the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the Word*, even before Baptiſm, or laying on of Hands, but as on the Apoſtles themſelves, and the reſt of the firſt Congregation at *Pentecoſt*. Moreover, when 'tis ſaid, *the Word of God grew and multiplied*, the moſt obvious Senſe of *the Word of God*, is, the Prophetick Word. Thus when 'tis ſaid at *Iconium*, that *the Diſciples were filled with the Holy Spirit*, I think by the Scripture Uſe of thoſe Words, it includes the ſame: And again, in *Chap.* xix. St. *Paul laid his Hands upon about twelve; and the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they propheſied.*

§ 3. From

§ 3. From these and other like Texts, we may well gather, that the Number of Prophetical Preachers was very great, in the Apostolick Age. But as many People run on the other Side, and do thence conclude, that during the same, there was no other Teachers or Speakers in the Church publickly, but such as were prophetically inspir'd; I must confess that tho', before the forming of Churches, among the *Gentiles*, it seems to have been so, yet after it, I can no more concur with these, than with others that say, Prophesying itself in the New Testament means no other than human Teaching: For as to the former, who would have it, that there was no other Elders or publick Ministers, than Prophets; even after the Term above expressed; I do not take the same to be concluded from what is said, that the Holy Spirit had made them Overseers, because the Holy Spirit in the Apostles and Prophets, might constitute them such, tho' they were not themselves Prophetically inspir'd. On the contrary, since the Holy Spirit did appoint and set in the Church, some Prophets, and some Teachers; if the Teacher in it spake as extraordinarily Inspir'd, I am wholly without a Key to distinguish them by. Furthermore, we find Women not allowed for Teachers, and yet allowed to speak in the Church as Prophets: Now, these being debarr'd speaking in their natural Capacity, because Teaching implies an Act of Authority; That Priviledge being reserv'd to the Men, shews, they had Right to it in the Christian Church, without Prophetical Inspiration, otherwise there was nothing at all in this Case, debarr'd to the Woman. Moreover, the general Directions given by the Spirit, in the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, concerning the Appointment of Bishops and Deacons, Elders or Ministers, running all upon moral Qualifications, and good Instruction in the Scripture, did, I think, then, as well as for Ages succeeding, lay a Foundation for the Ministry of Teaching, without the special Gift of Prophesying.

§ 4. As to that other Insinuation, that *Prophecy it self* did then mean no more than human speaking in the Church publickly, all that has been said touching it in the first Part of this Treatise, and what follows in this Second Part, will sufficiently confute: And whilst both these above-cited Ways of confounding the extraordinary Ministry of the Prophet in the Christian Church, will be more fully open'd in the Sequel of this History, I shall pass them by for

for the preſent, and limit my ſelf to the proper Definition of Prophetick Inſpiration: As therefore there is a Diſtinction occurring, in the New Teſtament, of Apoſtles and Prophets, it will be neceſſary to ſay ſomewhat, of the Difference between them. I know that the general Acceptation now is, that the Diſtinction is entirely limited by our Lord's Call and Nomination of his twelve Diſciples: Nevertheleſs, upon ſtrict Examination, the Definition of Apoſtles, will be found by the Text, much more extended; the Nomination however of Twelve, had undoubtedly a myſterious Signification, and in it ſelf very emphatical to the *Jews*, anſwering to the Number of Patriarchs and Tribes, which ſeems to be alſo alluded to, in *Rev.* xxi. 12, 14. where the *New Jeruſalem has Twelve Gates, with the Names of the twelve Tribes of the Children of Iſrael, written thereon; and the Wall of the City has twelve Foundations, and in them the Names of the twelve Apoſtles of the Lamb.* But allowing That myſtical Signification, the Name and Title of an Apoſtle, does not ſeem at all reſtrained, to the Number of Twelve in the New Teſtament; becauſe we find it on divers Occaſions mention'd, without reference to that Number.

§ 5. If the Diſtinction of Apoſtles, had been certainly defined by our Saviour's Nomination, then the Church of *Epheſus*, Rev. ii. 2. would have had no Occaſion of trying thoſe who ſaid they were Apoſtles, and no Subject of Commendation, in finding them Liars. Nor can we imagine any Ground for that in 2 *Cor.* xi. 13. upon which deceitful Perſons could transform themſelves into the Apoſtles of Chriſt, no more than of *Paul's* Claim to that Title, upon any Signs of an Apoſtle, wrought among the *Corinthians*, if ſo be, that the Definition of an Apoſtle, had been confined to the Number of the Twelve, called by our Saviour; yet St. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, are poſitively affirmed to be Apoſtles, *Acts* xiv. 14. and *Silvanus* and *Timothy* ſeem entitled to the like Diſtinction, if we compare 1 *Theſ.* i. 1. with *Chap.* ii. 6. Indeed the Word *Apoſtle* in the *Greek* ſignifies no more than *One ſent*; and in that Acceptation it ſtands equal with the Character of Prophets, who are *Meſſengers* extraordinarily delegated from Heaven; ſo that in reference to both, the Words are true; *How ſhould they preach, except they be ſent?* In which Senſe, I take both to be included in 2 *Cor.* viii. 23. where ſome Brethren to St. *Paul*, are ſtiled *the Glory of Chriſt*, and

Meſ-

Messengers of the Churches, just as the Prophet *Ahijah*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 6. is in the *Greek*, called an Apostle to the Wife of *Jeroboam*; and as our Lord says, the Servant sent, is not greater than he that sent him. Besides, we have frequent Mention of Apostles, without Limitation of Number, as where some are said to be of Note among the Apostles; and in 2 *Pet.* iii. 2. what we render, *us the Apostles*, is in the *Greek*, *our Apostles*, thereby hinting at such as were indefinite in Number. But that which seems to be conclusive on this Head, is what we find, 1 *Cor.* xv. 5. that our Lord risen, *was seen of the Twelve, and then of all the Apostles*, Ver. 7. Upon which Text, the Sense of the Primitive Ages on this Point, is represented by the illustrious *Chrysostom*; for, says he, there were other Apostles besides the Twelve, as the Seventy Disciples sent forth by our Saviour: And if the Seventy were included in that Appellation, we are sure there were more, of which Number even St. *Paul* himself stands for one, and *Barnabas* for another.

§ 6. In the larger Acceptation of the Word *Apostle*, meaning *One sent of God*, there is no Difference between him and the Prophet, and they are both included in that of our Lord, *Mat.* xxiii. 34---37. *Behold, I send unto you Prophets, and wise Men, and Scribes.* Such then were the Seventy as well as the Twelve, whom the Lord of the Harvest, who sendeth forth his Labourers, did send forth first unto the *Jews*. And as the Number of Twelve bore a Reference to the Patriarchs and Tribes of that People, so did the Seventy also to the Seventy Elders, on whom the Spirit of Prophecy rested on the Mount, and of which Number, the great Council representative of that Nation did consist. But seeing the Distinction of an *Apostle* from the Prophet, is intimated as above, to be more extended, even than these two Numbers of Seventy and Twelve, it cannot be amiss to offer unto Consideration somewhatf ur ther touching that Distinction. Wherefore, let us consider, that they having both a Commission immediate from Heaven, are so far equally *sent*, and the Publication of their Message, was often regulated as to Place and Time, by Direction Specifical of the Spirit, which appears from *Acts* xvi. 6, 10. compared with *Rom.* i. 10. Nevertheless, tho' the Act commissionating, did not absolutely fix the Distinction, yet the End to which they were sent, might, and I think, did denominate the Difference: For Example, *Paul*, by his first Vision was constituted a Minister, and Prophetical Wit-

Witneſs of Chriſt, and his Commiſſion at large declared, to be ſent unto the *Gentiles*, *Acts* xxvi. 16---18. And thus he pleads from it, *Am I not an Apoſtle? Have not I ſeen Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord?* But this Definition being however conſiſtent alſo, with the Miſſion of a Prophet, he adds for further Illuſtration, 1 *Cor.* ix. 2. *If I be not an Apoſtle* (diſtinguiſhed from a Prophet) *unto others, yet doubtleſs I am to you; for the Seal of mine Apoſtleſhip are ye, in the Lord:* That is, the *Corinthians* being firſt converted from *Heathenism*, by his Prophetick Miniſtry, *Acts* xviii. 1, 11. was Demonſtration of his Apoſtleſhip unto them. Wherefore, I conceive, the diſtinguiſhing *Criterion* between an Apoſtle and Prophet, lay in this, That the former was ſent to People, among whom Chriſt had not been named, and the latter's Miſſion was to thoſe already called, for the Edification of their Faith. So that from the firſt Formation of a Chriſtian Church in any Place, the Character of an Apoſtle, muſt *there* conſequently ceaſe: And this Obſervation will ſerve to open to us, the Mention in ſeveral Texts, of Apoſtles indefinite in Number. As to what other Definition might be made, from the more eminent extraordinary Gifts of an Apoſtle, above a Prophet, we grant that the miraculous Signs given out ro them, who yet believ'd not in Chriſt, may well be ſuppoſed to have accompany'd more conſpicuouſly the Apoſtle, becauſe of the Peculiarity of his Miſſion.

§ 7. Thus from the Explication of the Word *Apoſtle*, we comprehend under that Denomination, all thoſe original and Primary Prophets, whom Chriſt after his Aſcenſion, ſent forth, as his Ambaſſadors Extraordinary, and Plenipotentiaries; in his Name, to treat and form a new Alliance, and Fundamental Covenant, with Mankind; by Virtue whereof, all that by Faith accepted the Tender, and came into it, thereby became the People of God, as the Houſe of *Iſrael* had precedently been. But this Character of Ambaſſadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, in the full Extent of that Metaphorical Term, ceaſed (as I take it) with the Perſons of the primary Prophet, who laid the Foundations; tho' the Secondary one, being a Labourer together with God, in the building thereupon, and in the conſtant Husbandry of his Vineyard, might alſo properly fill up the Character of Ambaſſadors Reſidentiary: But how the Character of an Ambaſſador of Chriſt, to repreſent his Perſon, and ſpeak authoritatively in his Name, can

can with any Propriety of Speech, agree to any others than thoſe, who are immediately ſent by Him (as all Prophets in the Chriſtian Church were) I confeſs my ſelf unable to account for, ſeeing it is the higheſt Character poſſible of any Meſſenger extraordinary; and the admitting it to be due to the common Teacher, muſt overthrow the Order ſet by Chriſt, in his Church, in the New Teſtament. And indeed, tho' the Word *Ambaſſador* might with ſome Propriety, belong unto the Prophets, ſubſequent to the Apoſtles, yet becauſe by the more modern Uſe of the Word, it carries an Idea ſo elevated, that the Application of it even to them, might ſeem invidious to modeſt Ears, and ſomewhat diſagreeable with that Tenor of Humility, always found upon them; I ſhall in the ſubſequent Relation Hiſtorical, forbear the Word.

§ 8. The Prophets of the Old Teſtament, tho' acting by an immediate Delegation, under the Broad-Seal of Heaven, we find repreſented to us, under Tortures; under the Trial of cruel Mockings, Scourgings, Bonds, and Impriſonments; ſtoned, ſawn aſunder, tempted, often murder'd; at leaſt, they wander'd about in Sheep-skins, or in Goat-skins, being ſo afflicted by Men, that deſtitute of Friends, Food and Lodging, they were neceſſitated to wander in Deſerts, in Mountains, and lay hid in Dens and Caves of the Earth; and if theſe were the Enſigns of the Heavenly Ambaſſadors under the Old Teſtament, we need not wonder to hear St. *Paul* himſelf, repreſenting the Apoſtles, ſet forth as Spectacles, (or May-games,) expoſed to Deriſion, and treated as the Kennel-Dirt, and filthieſt Off ſcourings of the World; nay, and not only of the World, but often vilified and reproached among Chriſtians, and even Fools for Chriſt's Sake, whilſt others were wiſe (for themſelves) in Chriſt: Wherefore, we find That Apoſtle glorying of his Apoſtleſhip, in Hunger and Thirſt, in Faſtings often, in Cold and Nakedneſs, poor and having nothing, approving himſelf in Patience, under Afflictions, Neceſſities, Diſtreſſes, Stripes, Impriſonments, Watchings, (labouring in the Night with his Hands, that he might PREACH to others *GRATIS* in the Day,) and evil Reports, as a Deceiver; complaining, that all Men ſought their own, and not the Things of Jeſus Chriſt, ſeparate from, and in Oppoſition to their own: And St. *John* alſo was deſpiſed, by one who loved the Preheminence, to that Degree, as not to own any from the Apoſtle, who came to the

the Church where he predominated; no, nor ſubmit to the Apoſtle himſelf; if theſe then were the Treatment of the Ambaſſadors Plenipotentiary, what can be expected to attend the Prophets of a leſſer Rank, but what muſt needs ſound very diſagreeable, to the uſual Badges of Honour, attending the Character of Ambaſſadors among Men? But if the chiefeſt Apoſtles, ſtiled themſelves frequently Elders, Brethren, Servants or Miniſters, we ſhall rather let theſe ſuffice, for the Compellation of the Chriſtian Prophets, than uſe the abovemention'd Diſtinction of Ambaſſadors.

§ 9. The Order of the Divine Oeconomy, ſet by Chriſt in his Church, is by 1 *Cor.* xii. 28. given us, *Firſt*, Apoſtles; *Secondarily*, Prophets; *Thirdly*, Teachers; after that, Miracles: Touching the firſt, we have given our Sentiment, from the Scripture; and there will be little or nothing hereunder to be added, from human Writings, upon that Head: Touching Prophets who properly ſpake the Word of the Lord, they were by the very Gift of Prophecy, ſufficiently authoriz'd, always publickly to ſpeak for the Edification of the Church: But as they might be Idiots, or Women, or of irregular Lives, or wanting in other Qualifications required for it, in the Epiſtles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, and elſewhere; they were nevertheleſs ſometimes incapable of being Biſhops, Paſtors, Elders or Deacons; whereas if the Prophet had alſo thoſe Qualifications, he was capable with others, of thoſe publick Functions; and his being actuated ſometimes by the Spirit of Prophecy, did not hinder him at other, to exerciſe all the proper Duties of that Station, equally with the Teacher uninſpired. Thus we read in *Euſebius* from *Clemens Alexandrinus*, that St. *John* the Survivor of the Twelve, finding many in the Churches of leſſer *Aſia*, endowed with the Holy Spirit, did out of them appoint ſome that were mark'd out to him, by the Spirit, to be Biſhops and Paſtors; which Paſſage in the laſt Scene of the Apoſtle's Life, who died about *Anno Chriſti*, 95. we may upon another Occaſion, more authentically cite: But here it ſuffices to intimate, that the Prophet as ſuch, was not neceſſarily a ſtated Miniſter, in the Church, but was however capable of being ſo.

§ 10. As to the Teacher properly ſo call'd, or uninſpired Miniſter; he might enjoy ſome extraordinary Gifts of

of the Holy Spirit, as of Miracles, or Healing, and the like testimonial Signs; and yet be a Bishop, and Elder, very distinct from *Him* who had the Gift of Prophecy; for Miracles, Healing and the like, are reckon'd among the Diversities of Gifts and Ministrations, by the same Spirit, tho' not lodged in the same Person, who had the Gift of Prophecy, as in the 1 *Cor.* xii. may be read at large: For God hath set the Members, every one of them in the Body, as it hath pleased Him: And as the Body being one, hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body, so also is the Church of Christ; wherefore the Apostle subjoins to that emblematical Harmony and Union, in the natural Body, an Exhortation that there should be no Division in the Christian Community; but that the Members, instead of envying and grudging against one another, should have the same Sympathy and Care, one of another, as the Author of Nature has placed, in the Texture of the several Members, of the natural Body.

§ 11. There is little to be added to the Scripture on Record, touching Prophecy in this first Century: But *Philo*, an Enemy to Christianity, has left us the bare Mention of some People under the Name of Worshippers, and not yet call'd Christians; that were spread thro' all the Provinces of *Ægypt*, who did lead a prophetical Life, handling allegorically the holy Scriptures, and composing of their own, some grave Canticles and Hymns unto God, in the Manner of sacred Poetry. Furthermore, *Eusebius* tells us, that before the Wars began, in which *Jerusalem* was destroyed, according to the Denounciation of our Saviour; the Congregation of the Faithful, subsisting at *Jerusalem*, had a Revelation made to some among them, by an Oracle (*Epiphanius* says, an Angel) commanding that they should depart that City, and inhabit a Village beyond *Jordan*, called *Pella*; whether accordingly they went, and so escaped the Judicial Hand of God.

§ 12. These being the small Scraps, of what I can find elsewhere from any good Authority, touching the Spirit of Prophecy in that Century, so abundantly expressed in the sacred Text; I shall conclude this Chapter with a Tradition in *Eusebius*, *Lib.* 3. *Chap.* xxi. "that the Apostles "of Christ, used in their preaching, a plain and simple "Manner of Speech, from a Divine and forceable Power, which

" which they had receiv'd of Chriſt; and by ſuch a De-
" monſtration of the Holy Spirit, they publiſh'd the Know-
" ledge of the Kingdom of Heaven, to the whole World,
" being nothing ſolicitous about writing of Books; and
" thoſe few we have, ſome of them wrote not, without
" being conſtrain'd thereto; particularly St. *John* (as *Epi-*
" *phanius* ſays, *Lib.* 2. *Tom.* 1. *p.* 433.) being in himſelf
" very unwilling and avoiding it, was forced and compel-
" led by the Spirit, to write his Goſpel, a little before his
" Death.

CHAP. II.

Of PROPHECY *uncontroverted, in the* SECOND CENTURY.

§ 1. THE *Greek* Word *Paracleet*, rendred *the Comforter*, in the Goſpel of St. *John*, is in his firſt Epiſtle, *Chap.* ii. 1. rendred *an Advocate*; but the Word in its Derivation, is capable of a much more extended meaning, than either, or both thoſe Words do import; which appears by the different Conſtructions, the *Engliſh* often puts upon the ſame Word, in the *Verb*, as well as *Noun*. Thus in 1 *Theſs.* ii. 2, 3, 4. *I was bold in our God to ſpeak unto you the Goſpel of God, for our Exhortation was not of Deceit, but as we were allowed of God to be put in Truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak*; in which Text and others, the Word, παρακλησις, *Exhortation*, means, ſays *Chryſoſtom*, *Teaching*; and indeed the Context clearly ſhews it; for St. *Paul*'s preaching is there termed, the Goſpel (or good Meſſage) of God: He therefore that deſpiſed it, deſpiſed not Man, but God, who had given unto him, his Holy Spirit. Now *Exhortation*, when it is applied to the Holy Spirit, carries in it, throughout the New Teſtament, the Nature and Validity of an authoritative Command; nay, tho' the ſame *Greek* Word be rendred, *beſeech* (as ſometimes) or *perſwade*; thus in 2 *Theſ.* iii. 12, 14. *We command*, (παραγγελομεν, rather declare) *and exhort by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that Men work and eat their own Bread; and if any Man obey not our Word by this Epiſtle, note that Man, and have no company with him, that he may be aſhamed.* And thus when the Apoſtle exhorts,

that

that *Supplications, Prayers and giving of Thanks, be made for all Men,* we with one Conſent conſtrue it, a Divine Command for ſo doing.

§ 2. The ſame *Greek* Word is in *Acts* xxviii. 20. rendred, *called for,* and properly agrees with the Derivation, which ſignifies any ſort of ſpeaking aloud or calling out to, and ſo well ſuits to publick Preaching; and is ſo applied, not only to the prophetical Inſpiration of St. *Paul* abovemention'd, but in 1 *Pet.* v. 12. *I have written briefly, exhorting and* (parallel to) *teſtifying that this is the true Grace of God, wherein ye ſtand:* Therefore the ſame Word is joined with other Ways (beſides Exhortation) uſed in preaching the Word, 2 *Tim.* iv. 2. and elſewhere. Seeing then the *Engliſh* Tranſlation of the Word with the Senſe concurring, does allow us to underſtand by it, *to plead as an Advocate, to ſpeak aloud, in exhorting and commanding,* as in the Function of Prophetick Preaching; let us have recourſe to that great Promiſe of our Saviour to his Church, *John* xiv. 16. *I will pray the Father, and He ſhall give you another* (Paracleet,) *Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth:* The following Verſes ſhew plainly, *that other Paracleet* was to ſupply his Place; therefore our Lord by Way of Explanation, adds, I will not leave you Orphans, I will come to you; *again, a little while, and ye ſhall ſee me,* and I will manifeſt my ſelf unto you. All which, in this, and the two following Chapters, is aſcribed to that *Paracleet,* ſaying, *He ſhall teach you all things,* and when He is come, *He ſhall teſtify of me; I have many Things to ſpeak unto you,* but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit when the Spirit of Truth is come, *He ſhall guide you in all Truth; He ſhall not ſpeak of Himſelf, but whatſoever He ſhall hear, that ſhall He ſpeak; He ſhall glorify me, for He ſhall receive of mine, and declare* (αναγγελει, publiſh) *it unto you, and ſhall declare things to come;* when He is come, *He will reprove the World of Sin, and convince it of Judgment,* &c.

§ 3. Seeing therefore, our Lord the great Prophet, Teacher and Maſter of his Church, has explain'd to us thus, the Office of that Comforter to his Church how He would not leave us Orphans, but come again, and be repreſented by the *Paracleet,* another like Himſelf; that ſhould ſpeak unto us, teſtify of Him, guide us, reprove, and declare to us many things, he had not done; all theſe do indeed agree, with the Character of an *Advocate,* from and for God pleading

ing with Men, and with publick authoritative *Preaching, Exhorting* and *Commanding* by the Prophet; and all these make up a compleat Definition of the Spirit of Prophecy, which is the Testimony of Jesus, and of a COMFORTER, such another as our Lord Himself; for if the Presence of the Head and Husband, ought to be the chief Delight and Comfort, of the Spouse; so also the Presence of Christ with his Church, extraordinarily signified, her main Complacency and Joy; and the Presence of the Spirit (Christ's Representative) like to that said to *Moses*, *Exod.* xxxiii. 14. *My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee Rest*: In this Sense, it will be found, that the primitive Christians did expect, that the said Comforter would abide with them for ever; and whether any Dislike and Contempt, on the Part of the espoused Church, were not the just Cause, that it did not so, we refer to further Search into that Matter.

§ 4. In the Duration of the Old Testament Canon, we find no Mention of *Sadducees*; but as other Records tell us, That Sect sprung up, some very few Ages precedent to the final Dissolution of that embodied Nation: Among other Tenets of theirs, this was one, that all the Books subsequent to those of *Moses*, were not of Divine Authority, and of consequence, they rejected the Inspiration of the Prophets, tho' their Body for all that, bore a considerable Sway among the Priests. In like Manner, for several Ages pass'd, there have been in the Christian Church, many who plead that of *Rev.* xxii. 18. *If any Man shall add unto these Things, God shall add unto him the Plagues written in this Book*; as if it signified, a *ne plus ultra*, or final Bar put to the Spirit of Prophecy, acting in the Christian Church after it; tho' I see not, why the *Sadducees*, might not, with as much Reason, have urged that of *Deut.* xii. 32. *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it*: For the Argument brought by some Christians against the Survival of Prophecy, after the Decease of St. *John*, *viz.* that it must necessarily diminish and take away, from the Authority of the primary sacred Record, might also equally bear a fair Pretext, in the Mouths of the *Saducees*, who pretended to magnify thereby, the Law of *Moses*. But without entring into a formal Discussion, of such a fallacious Argument, let us here content our selves, to give Matter of Fact in Evidence of the contrary, and that from the Beginning, there were no such

ſuch Sentiments openly avowed among Chriſtians. But as the *Saducees* doubtleſs knew how to recomend themſelves and guild over their Arguments, with plauſible Declamations againſt the horrid Dangers of Enthuſiaſm, and by Applauſes of the Manner, wherein God ſpake, as Mouth to Mouth with *Moſes*; ſo I hope, that any ſuch malevolent Inſinuations, cannot ſtand good, againſt the Evidence of Fact, enumerated by a Cloud of Witneſſes herein following, as free as any Men whatſoever, from the Imputation of encouraging, a wild or guilty Enthuſiaſm; and ſo learned at the ſame Time, in the Antiquities of the Chriſtian Church, and in the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God, as are by no means to be ſuppoſed capable, of being impoſed on, by fooliſh Pretexts to the Spirit of Prophecy, or cunningly deviſed Fables touching Divine Revelation.

§ 5. As therefore the Spirit was poured out and ſhed forth abundantly at *Pentecoſt*, and at divers other Times after it, as the Hiſtory of the *Acts* relates; and we have in the former Part of this Treatiſe, cited many Inſtances of its Agency, not only in Prophecy properly ſo called; but in the Divine Manifeſtations of Viſion, Dream, and Voice from Heaven, during the Apoſtolick Age, terminating with the Life of St. *John*, and Concluſion of the firſt Century; now that the like Manifeſtations of Chriſt's Preſence with his Church, and the Exertions of the Spirit of Prophecy teſtifying of Him, did not ceaſe, with the ſaid Term, but continued ſeveral Ages after it; appears beyond any poſſible Reaſon of Doubt, from the concurring Teſtimony of many bright Luminaries in the Church, writing of themſelves or their own Times, and of Things whereof they were Eye and Ear Witneſſes; even ſuch, as were by the moſt judicious, and by common acceptation, approved, as clear and diſtinct Acts of God revealing Himſelf, in the divers Manners, wherein He uſed to ſpeak by the Prophets.

§ 6. The firſt Proof of theſe Matters, I ſhall quote from a Book bearing in the Title Page; "The *Epiſtles* of the Apoſtolical Fathers, St. *Barnabas*, St. *Clement*, St. *Ignatius*, St. *Polycarp*, the Shepherd of *Hermas*, and the Martyrdoms of St. *Ignatius* and St. *Polycarp*, written by thoſe who were preſent at their Sufferings; being, together with the Holy Scripture of the New Teſtament, a compleat Collection of the moſt primitive Antiquity, for about 150 Years after Chriſt. Tranſlated and Publiſh'd

" liſh'd with a large preliminary Diſcourſe, relating to the
" ſeveral Treatiſes, here put together. By the Right Re-
" verend Father in God, *William* Lord Biſhop of *Lincoln*.
" *Anno.* 1710.

(In the Preliminary Diſcourſe of which Tract, 'tis ſaid) " that the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Spirit
" with which the Apoſtles were endowed, the Holy Scrip-
" tures themſelves tell us, were diſtributed to other Belie-
" vers as well as unto them; and in the Fathers, whoſe
" Writings are here put together, there appears ſuffici-
" ent Indications, of the Continuance of theſe extraordi-
" nary Powers; even after the Time of theſe Fathers:
" We have the expreſs Teſtimony of *Juſtin Martyr*, to aſ-
" ſure us, that thoſe extraordinary Gifts continued ſtill in
" the Church, and were communicated not only to Men
" but Women; and that we may be ſure, he ſpake no-
" thing in this Matter, but what he could undeniably have
" made out, we find him boaſting of it, againſt *Trypho* the
" *Jew*, and urging it then, as an unanſwerable Argu-
" ment in Behalf of Chriſtianity, and againſt the *Jews*,
" from whom *the Spirit of Prophecy* had a long Time
" been departed: As to the Epiſtles here publiſhed that
" of St. *Clement*, *manifeſtly declares* to the like effect; for
" he tells us, that ſome in the Church of *Corinth*, not
" only *then*, had ſuch *extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit*, but
" were even Proud and conceited upon the Account of
" them. *Let a Man*, ſays he, *have Faith*, that is, ſuch a
" Faith by which he is enabled to work Miracles; *let him*
" *be powerful to utter myſtical Knowledge*, for to *that*, his Ex-
" preſſion manifeſtly refers (and if ſo, then undoubtedly
" this was prophecying, as the Citer hereof conceives) *let*
" *him be wiſe in diſcerning of Speeches*, another (prophetical)
" Gift common in thoſe Times; *but ſtill*, ſays he, *by how*
" *much the more he ſeems to excel others*, *viz.* upon the Ac-
" count of theſe extraordinary Endowments, *by ſo much*
" *the more, will it behoove him, to be humble minded, and to*
" *ſeek what is profitable to all Men, and not to his own Ad-*
" *vantage*: In like Manner St. *Ignatius* not only ſuppoſes
" that *ſuch Gifts*, might be in others, but plainly intimates,
" that he himſelf was endowed with a large Portion of
" them: Thus we are to underſtand what St. *Clement* tells
" us alſo, *that the Apoſtles did* prove by the Spirit, *the firſt*
" *Fruits of their Converſions, and out of them ſet Biſhops and*
" *Paſtors, over ſuch as ſhould believe*; that by the extraor-
" dinary Gifts of thoſe, whom they pitched upon, they
perceived

" perceiv'd they were worthy of such an Employ, and there-
" fore chose them out for it; the Manner whereof we con-
" ceive to be, as in the Person of *Timothy*, whom St. *Paul*
" exhorts to stir up *the Gift*, το χαρισμα, extraordinary
" Power of the Spirit, which says he, 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. *was*
" *given unto him by Prophecy, with or through the Imposition*
" *of Hands* upon him.

§ 7. " Now, what is said above, affords us just Cause to
" conclude, that those holy Men, whose Writings we have
" here collected, were doubtless endowed with a very large
" Portion, of the *extraordinary Gifts of the holy Spirit*; whe-
" ther we consider the Frequency of those Gifts in the *Age*
" in which they liv'd, and to how much lesser and worser
" Men, these Gifts were *usually communicated*, then; since it
" is certain, that in those Times, the extraordinary Gifts of
" the Holy Spirit, were bestowed, not only upon such as
" were constituted Pastors of the Church, but upon *a great*
" *many of the common Christians too*; or whether we consi-
" der the Judgment which the very Apostles were by the
" Spirit enabled to make of these Persons; or *thirdly*, if we
" look to those Accounts which still remain to us (notwith-
" standing Interpolations and otherways of Corruption,
" noted upon some of them, in Dr. *Mills*'s Preface to his
" New Testament) they will plainly shew us, that these
" Persons were endowed, and that in a very eminent Man-
" ner, with this Power, and extraordinary Gift of the
" Blessed Spirit; or *lastly*, if we duly weigh the publick
" Approbation, given of these Writings, by the Church,
" whilst the extraordinary Gifts remained so common in
" it, that the Judgment of the Church touching them,
" could scarcely therein be mistaken; because one great
" particular of those Gifts, was for the *discerning of Prophe-*
" *cy*, to judge of what was proposed by any one, or writ-
" ten for the Use and Benefit of the Church.

§ 8. " Touching the Approbation of the Church, in
" those Days, wherein she enjoyed the Benefit of those
" extraordinary Gifts, and particularly that of discerning
" Spirits; the Epistle of *Barnabas*, is not only quoted
" with great Honour, by those of the next Age to him,
" but in the antient Catalogue of *Cotelerius*, of the In-
" spir'd Books of the New Testament, we find it plac'd, the
" very next to the Epistle of St. *Jude*, and no Difference
" put, between the Authority of the one and the other.

" The Epiſtle of St. *Clement* was a long Time read pub-
" lickly, with the other Scriptures, in the Congregations
" of the Faithful, and made a Part of their Bible, and
" was numbred among the ſacred Writings. Thus our
" *moſt antient Alexandrian* Manuſcript, of the Old and New
" Teſtament (ſuppos'd to be written, about 400 Years after
" Chriſt) gives it ſtill a Place there: And even after this,
" *Epiphanius* tells us, that it was wont, ſo to be read *in the*
" *Church*, in his Time. And for the Book of St. *Hermas*,
" both *Euſebius* and St. *Hierom* (the moſt exact Chronolo-
" giſts of the primitive Ages) tell us, that it alſo was *wont*
" *to be read in the Churches*, and the antient Stichometry of
" *Cotelerius* beforemention'd, places the ſame, in the very
" next Rank to the Acts of the holy Apoſtles: And in ſe-
" veral of *the moſt antient* Manuſcripts of the New Teſta-
" ment, we find it *ſtill written* in the ſame Volume with the
" Books of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts; as if it had been
" eſteem'd of the ſame Value and Authority with them.

§ 9. " The Name of *Barnabas* was at firſt *Joſes*, but by
" the Apoſtles changed into *that*, ſignifying as by *Luke*,
" *the Son of Conſolation*, becauſe of the Conſolation he gave
" to the poor Chriſtians, by ſelling his whole Eſtate for
" their Relief. And the Author of the Epiſtle here quo-
" ted, was the very Man, as we have moſt Reaſon to be-
" lieve, ſo celebrated in the *Acts*, as the Fellow-Labourer
" of St. *Paul*, and called alſo an Apoſtle: As to the Per-
" ſon of St. *Clement* alſo, it is no ſmall Commendation,
" which the Holy Spirit by St. *Paul*, has left us of him,
" *Phil.* iv. 3. where the Apoſtle mentions him, not only
" as his Fellow-Labourer, but as one, whoſe Name was
" written in the Book of Life. And as to St. *Hermas*, it
" is very probable that he was the ſame Perſon men-
" tion'd, *Rom.* xvi. 14. and in reſpect to the extraordi-
" nary Revelation vouchſafed him, even in thoſe Times of
" Miracles, it was eſteem'd ſo ſingular a Grace to him,
" that we find ſome other Chriſtians, not ſo humble as
" they ought to be, became Enemies to him upon the Ac-
" count of them. The Epiſtle of St. *Polycarp*, with that
" of the Church of *Smyrna*, here under ſubjoined, were
" read publickly too, in the Aſſemblies of the Faithful (*tho'*
" *not generally, as the preceding Tracts were, nor ever with*
" *them admitted into the Volume of the New Teſtament ſacred*
" *Writings, as appears in the Caſe of the others*;) and for thoſe
" of St. *Ignatius*, we find a mighty Value put upon them

by

" by the Christians of those Times *(tho' no where mention'd*
" *as read in the Church, or plac'd among the Canon Scripture.)*

10. Besides the short Notes above, included in a Parenthesis, for Explanation of the Things there treated; I judge it necessary also, for the Information of the less learned Reader, here to add, That the fixing the New Testament Scripture Canon, exclusive of the Writings of *Barnabas*, *Clement* and *Hermas*, was due to Pope *Gelasius* about *Anno* 500. from which Time, they became generally omitted in the *Western* Church; and the retaining of them *still* by several antient Manuscripts, is one of the best Proofs that occur, to manifest the Antiquity of those valuable Scripture Records. But whereas, it is alledg'd above, that the Ages which acknowledg'd the Inspiration of these later Prophets, by reading them publickly in the Church, and enrolling them conjointly with the rest of the Books of the New Testament, were better Judges of the Prophetick Spirit indicting them; by reason of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, then subsisting in the Church, and particularly that of discerning Spirits; many People may be inquisitive, how latter Ages, void of that Advantage of the Spirit of Prophecy to judge by, came to exclude these Tracts, from the Body of Holy Writ, which were precedently so long, ranked in it: For the Sake of such, it is necessaty to add, that the Text of the New Testament, which we now admit, is supposed in every Part of it, to be stampt with the Authority of the Apostles, who had brighter and more extensive Gifts of the Holy Spirit upon them; (tho' this also concerning the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, and some other Parts of it, is mightily disputed among the Learned to this Day) but allowing that Supposition, as if indisputable in every Part, if any think it not a just Cause to exclude the ensuing Tracts, I must confess, I can give them, no further reasonable Account; unless we may be allow'd to fear some Design of eclipsing the Proofs of Prophecy, subsisting after the Apostles, might be one Motive to leave them out of the Volumes of Scripture: But after the Exclusion of them, the said Cause does doubtless at this Day, concur with others, why they are presumptuously descried. But since it is very likely, that the separating them from the Body of Holy Writ, has given the more easie Occasion of corrupting them, and giving them a Tincture from the more modern Principles and Interests; I would not be misunderstood, as if I thought them wor-

thy in their preſent Poſture, to be re-admitted into the Number of ſacred Tracts of the New Teſtament: But if in any Part of them, more than other, they remain ſtill *free from* ſuch Alterations and Additions; I do conceive, that what I ſhall hereunder quote from them, may with juſt Reaſon be eſteem'd ſo; becauſe the Quotations I make, will wholly concern the Manner and Circumſtances of the Spirit of Prophecy, whatſoever Ways diſplayed therein; which Thing, I believe, moſt Men will agree, is of that Nature, that the Principles and Intereſts of latter Ages, are not very likely to have ſo much favour'd, as for the Encouragement thereof, to have given in to the corrupting any ancient Records: But now, it is high Time to proceed to thoſe Citations, from the late Edition in *Engliſh* of the foremention'd Pieces, under the Name of ſo venerable a Perſon.

§ 11. The Epiſtle of *Barnabas* tells us, that when Chriſt choſe his Apoſtles, which were afterwards to publiſh his Goſpel, he took Men who had been very great Sinners, that thereby He might ſhew, He *came not to call the righteous, but Sinners*, (for ſo Dr. *Mills*, on *Mat.* ix. 13. reads it, omitting, *to Repentance*;) wherefore, it was compatible with the Way of God, at any Time to call ſinful Perſons, to partake the Gifts extraordinary of the Spirit: But the Manner of the Spirit of Prophecy upon a Man, is deſcribed by divers Expreſſions in this Tract ſuch as theſe that follow; "*Moſes*, "ſays he, *ſpake in the Spirit*, and upon Mention of a Text "in *Zephan*, the *Latin* of *Cotelerius* has it, *This does the* "*Veſſel of his Spirit* (*viz.* Zeph.) *ſay*: Moreover, he calls, "the Miniſtry of the Prophet, the being *taught of God*, "and therefore adds, Thou ſhalt love as the Apple of thine "Eye, every one that *ſpeaketh* unto thee, *the Word of the* "*Lord*: For, ſays, he, God hath *put in us*, the engrafted "Gift of his Teaching, within; (even as St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* "v. 19. *God hath put in us the Word*;) wherefore, God "truly dwells in our Houſe, (earthly, of this Body) that "is, in us. He himſelf *propheſies* within us: He Himſelf "dwelleth in us, and openeth to us the Gate of our Temple; (the Body;) that is, the Mouth of Wiſdom (in-"ſpir'd;) he therefore that deſires to be ſaved, looketh not "unto the Man, but unto Him that dwelleth in him, "and *ſpeaketh* by him; being ſtruck with Wonder, for-"aſmuch as he never heard him ſpeaking ſuch Words, "out of his Mouth." Now the Comment of *Cotelerius* upon

" on this Place says; Thus it is true, what we read in " *Luke* x. *He that heareth you, heareth me*; and *Mat.* xx. " *It is not ye that shall speak, but the Spirit of my Father that* " *speaketh in you*; and on *Psal.* lxviii. 11. [Heb. *The Lord* " *will give the Word; great the Army of Women that publish* " *it.*] St. *Hillary* says, God therein promises to pour the " Word (or Utterance) into the very Mouths."

§ 12. The Preface or Preliminary Discourse, having given an Account from the Epistle of *Clement*, of the abundance of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, subsisting in the Church of *Corinth*, we shall be the more brief in our Remarks thereon: But as there, it was observ'd, that some Persons enjoying them, became proud and conceited on that Account, it was certainly a very perverse Use of a good Thing, and yet at the same Time not incompatible with the Reality of that thing possessed by them; for tho' the Gift of Prophecy renders a Man a Witness to others, of the invisible World, and should be, by its Operation, the powerfullest Means of Sanctification to the Person himself, yet it does not necessarily, and as a Cause causing, sanctify; but inward Grace, is another kind of Operation from the same Spirit: Nevertheless, by the Scope and main Drift of St. *Clement* in that Epistle, it appears that the Pride and Contention flowing from it, which distracted that Church, was not chiefly lodged in the Inspir'd of it, but in those that opposed them; for, says he, " Let every " one be subject to *his Neighbour*, according to the Order, " in which he is placed by the (extraordinary) Gift of God, " and let us choose to offend some foolish and unlearned " Men, (as 2 *Pet.* iii. 16.) lifted up, and glorying in the " Pride of their own Speech or Reason, rather than God; " then, enumerating several Prophets of the Old Testament, " he particularizes in *Rahab* the Harlot, that she also had " the Spirit of Prophecy, as well as Faith: And since, says " he, all the Ministers of the Gospel-Grace, have spoken " by the Holy Spirit, and such were constituted Elders " over you by the Apostles, with the Consent of the whole " Church, and who have with all Lowliness and Innocency ministred to the Flock, in Peace and without " Self-Interest. It is a great Shame to your Christian " Profession, that the antient Church of the *Corinthians*, " should be led into a Sedition against its Spiritual Elders; therefore, it is unseemly for any to harden their " Hearts, as the Hearts of those were hardned, who raised

" up

" up Sedition againſt *Moſes*, the Servant of God. Who-
" ever has any Charity, let him ſay, if this Sedition, this
" Contention, and theſe Schiſms be upon my Account, I
" am ready to depart whitherſoever, and do whatſoever
" the Multitude (the Church) ſhall command me, only let
" the Flock of Chriſt be in Peace with the Elders that are
" ſet over it. Do ye therefore, who laid the firſt Foun-
" dation of this Sedition, ſubmit your ſelves unto your
" Elders, bending the Knees of your Hearts, learn to be
" ſubject, not unto us, but to the Will of God, laying
" aſide all proud and arrogant Boaſting of your Oratory:
" For thus ſpeaks the ſuper-excellent Wiſdom, I will *pour*
" *out of the Word of my Spirit*, upon you, I will make
" known *my Speech* unto you, becauſe I called, and ye would
" not hear, I ſtretched out *my Words*, and ye regarded not;
" *but ye have ſet at Naught all my Council, and would none*
" *of my Reproof, I alſo will laugh at your Calamity, and mock*
" *when your Fear cometh.*"

§ 13. The preliminary Diſcourſe has proved beyond any poſſible Doubt, that the Book of *Hermas* was receiv'd, read and own'd by the Church, as Divine Revelation, even as the other Books of the New Teſtament: It follows therefore by neceſſary Conſequence, that the Ways of God revealing therein ſpecify'd, were ſuch, as the Ages bleſſed with the Spirit of Prophecy, knew to be well warranted and authoris'd by many Preſidents among them, and by the Rule of comparing Spiritual Things (whether written in the Bible, or exiſtent before them) with ſpiritual: And indeed, I know nothing can ſhock ſeveral of the Syſtems commonly now receiv'd, touching Divine Revelation, (particularly that wherein the Subſerviency of Angels in the Hand of God, for Prophetick Inſpiration is almoſt wholly excluded) like a Treatiſe, which if it had remained among the Records of Holy Writ, would have for ever probably prevented the frightful Growth of *Sadduciſm* in the Chriſtian World, by continual inculcating of Principles, that muſt have ſtifled it, even at the very Roots. But whatever be the Principles that have ſapped the Foundations of Faith in all Revelation, and troubled the Fountains of that Faith, and brought Anarchy and confuſed Inconſiſtency, into the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God; we are content to appeal to thoſe firſt Principles, largely inſiſted on in the preceding Part of this Treatiſe, and herein exemplified in the prophetical Ages of Chriſtianity.

§ 14. The

§ 14. The Revelation made to *Hermas*, for which he was envied and reproached, very blameably in those that did so; was given him entirely by the Hands of an Angel, who appear'd in the Habit of a Shepherd, and thence his Book took its Title of *the Shepherd of Hermas*. Now the Authority with which the same was given him, appears from his own Words here following, which are meerly historical of the Visions vouchsafed him, as the *Apocalypse* of St. *John* also is; The Angel said to him, "Thou shalt "write two Books of what I shall say to thee, and send "one of them to *Clement*, with Order to dispatch the same "to foreign Parts, and the other thou shalt read in this "City, *(Rome,)* with the Elders of the Church; for these "Things are not reveal'd to thee only, but that thou may'st "make them manifest unto all; and woe to the doubtful, "even to those who shall hear these Words, and shall despise "them, it had been better for them that they had not been "born: And he, the Angel said, thou shalt live, if thou "keep these my Commandments; and whosoever shall "hear and do these Commands, shall live, so shall thy "former Sins be forgiven. In like Manner shall all others "be forgiven, who shall observe these my Commandments." But the moral Commandments and prophetical Injunctions, intermixed with the Revelation, I omit here, as not necessary to the present Occasion and Subject. "Fulfill "therefore diligently this Ministry, which I commit to "thee, and thou shalt find great Benefit by it; whereupon I wrote his Commands and Similitudes, and did as "he bad me; which Things, if when ye have heard, ye "shall observe to do them, and shall walk according to "them; and exercise your selves in them, ye shall receive "from the Lord, those Things which he hath herein promised unto you: But if having heard them, ye shall not "repent, but shall still go on, to add to your Sins, ye shall "be punished by him; all these Things, That Shepherd, "the Angel of Repentance (or calling to it) commanded "me to write."

§ 15. Thus the Command being declared by an Angel, with the Sanction of Rewards and Punishments, both to the Prophet and others, the preliminary Discourse acquaints us, That the Church, or Christian Community by Faith obeying, and penitently preparing for some publick Judgments denounced, did greatly profit by this Prophetical Warning;

Warning; and as to all the Exhortations of it, the ſame was regarded as the Word of the Lord; we proceed now to recount the Manner of the Viſion, in the Circumſtances attending on *Hermas*, who gives it to the Effect and Purport, as followeth; " In the Begininng of his great " Revelations, he fell into a Sleep extatick, and was car- " ried away in the Spirit, at which Time an Angel ap- " pear'd to him in the Form of a young Woman, and con- " vinced him of ſome particular Sins of his. Another " Time the Angel appear'd in the Form of a venerable " antient Woman, and then his Hair ſtood an End, " and a kind of Horror ſeiz'd him, and ſhe took him by " the Hand, and lift him up from his Knees in Prayer. " Again, when he was once walking in the Fields, and " praying to God, that the Revelations given by the ve- " nerable antient Woman, repreſenting his Church, might " be confirmed, ſomething like a human Voice anſwer'd, " *Doubt not Hermas*, for at that Inſtant he ſaw ſomewhat " which he rather ſuſpected than knew, that it was a " Viſion. After theſe Things which filled up Four Viſi- " ons; when he roſe from Prayer in his Chamber, and " was ſat down upon the Bed, a certain Man came in to " him, with a reverend Aſpect, in the Habit of a Shep- " herd; who immediately ſat down by him, and ſaid, I " am ſent that I ſhould dwell with thee, all the remain- " ing Days of thy Life." From this Time, the Angelick Shepherd often appear'd to him, and ſhew'd him Viſi- ons, and explain'd the Signification of them in a familiar Way, as we read touching *Zechariah* and the Angel to him; at laſt, even in the Cloſe of the Revelation publiſhed by St. *Hermas*, and after he had written the Book of it, ſays he, " the Angel which had deliver'd me to that " Shepherd, came into the Houſe, and ſat upon the Bed, " and that Shepherd ſtood at his Right-hand; then he " call'd me and ſaid, I deliver'd thee and thy Houſe to " this Shepherd, that thou might'ſt be protected by him, " and I ſaid, Yes, Lord; and he added, whoſoever ſhall " do according to the Commands of this Shepherd, who " is a Prince of great Authority, and in great Honour " with God, he ſhall live; but they that ſhall not keep his " Commands, ſhall deliver themſelves unto Death, and " ſhall be every one guilty of his own Blood: But I ſay, " unto thee, keep theſe Commandments, and thou ſhalt " find a Cure for all thy Sins."

§ 16. The

§. 16. The foregoing Clauſe ſhews the Manner of the Viſions to St. *Hermas*; and now let us ſee, what that Revelation to him which was generally acknowledg'd in the Church, for Divine, gives us of the Ways of the Spirit of Prophecy in general; wherefore to this Purpoſe after "The Enumeration of divers moral evil Qualities, he ſays, "theſe, if they remain in the ſame Man, *the Veſſel in which* "*the Holy Spirit dwells*, it cannot contain them both toge- "ther, (long;) when therefore, the Spirit extraordinary de- "parteth from that Man, he is afterwards filled with wick- "ed Spirits: In particular, Doubting and Sadneſs do grieve "him, for the Spirit of the Lord, which is given to dwell "in the Fleſh (or Body, called alſo a Veſſel, 1 *Theſ.* iv. 4.) "endureth no ſuch Sadneſs, but will entreat God and de- "part from thee; the Spirit, that being asked, ſpeaketh "according to Men's Deſires and concerning many other "Affairs of this preſent World, underſtands not the Things "which belong to God; but every Spirit that is given "from God, needeth not to be asked (poſſibly he means, "knowing thy Thought) but having the Power of the Di- "vinity, ſpeaks all things of it ſelf, becauſe he comes from "above, from the Power of the Spirit of God." Upon which laſt mention'd Paſſages the Annotator obſerves, that *the Spirit of the Lord which is given* to dwell in the Fleſh, which is vexed, and then *entreats God* to depart thence, which is *given from God*, and cometh from above, that is, from the Power of *the Spirit of God*, is not God Himſelf but a created Spirit; as indeed (ſays he) *Paul* himſelf mentions *the Spirit which is* (Greek) *from God*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 12. diſtinguiſhed from, the *Spirit of God*, v. 11. But to purſue the Words of *Hermas*, ſpeaking of an evil Spirit that propheſies to a Man in Corners and hidden Places, he adds, "when he, that evil Spirit, cometh into the Company of "juſt Men, that have the Spirit of God *in them*, and they "pray unto the Lord, the evil Spirit flies from that Man, "and he is dumb, and cannot ſpeak any thing; but when "a Man who hath *the Spirit of God*, cometh as above into "the Company of the Faithful, and they pray unto "the Lord, then *the Holy Angel of God fills that Man* "with the Bleſſed Spirit, and he (propheſies, or) ſpeaks "in the Congregation, as he is *moved of God:* For the Spirit of God doth not ſpeak *to a Man* when he himſelf will, but when God pleaſes (which it ſeems here, uſed to be) when the Congregation put up their Prayers for it.

§ 17. Moſt

§ 17. Moſt of the laſt Paragraph is to be found, in thoſe Chapters of *Hermas*, entitled the 10th and 11th Commands. What follows, is in the 9th Similitude; "The "Angel, the Shepherd, ſays *Hermas*, came to me, and ſaid "I will ſhew thee all thoſe Things, which the Spirit un- "der the Figure of the Church (*viz.* the venerable Old "Woman) ſpake with thee; that Spirit, ſaid the Angel, "is the Son of God, and becauſe then thou wert weak "in Body, until ſtrengthen'd ſince by the Spirit, it was "not declared unto thee by the Angel, that thou might'ſt "alſo ſee him; but now thou art enlightned by the An- "gel; but yet by the ſame Spirit (the Son of God) and the "forty Perſons thou lately ſaweſt in Viſion, are the Apo- "ſtles and Teachers of *the preaching of the Son of God*; for "theſe firſt carried thoſe Spirits, and they departed not "the one from the other, neither the Men from the Spi- "rits, nor the Spirits from the Men; but the Spirits were "joined to thoſe Men, even to the Day of their Death; "who, if they had not had theſe Spirits with them, or car- "ried thoſe Holy Spirits, they could not have been uſe- "ful to the building of the Tower, thou ſaweſt in Viſion, "as a Repreſentation of the Church, jointed, framed and "built up." All which Aſſertions touching the Manner of Prophetick Inſpiration, do concur to give us the Senſe of the pure Ages of Chriſtianity, to be the ſame, which in the firſt Part of this Treatiſe, has been evidently proved from the Old and New Teſtament; that is, that Divine Inſpiration to Prophecy, is conſiſtent with the intermediate Agency of Angels, in it.

§ 18. Having thus drawn out ſome Remarks, from the Writings of *Barnabas*, *Clement*, and *Hermas*, ſuch as were in the primitive Ages, enrolled in the Volume, of the ſacred Records of the New Teſtament, we proceed now to the Epiſtles of the bleſſed Martyr *Ignatius*, and the Martyrology of his Death; which tho' they were not, in that Degree, held ſacred as the preceding, yet were receiv'd with much Honour in thoſe Ages, becauſe he was univerſally known, for a prophetical Biſhop; and theſe Epiſtles were written, as his farewel Legacy, to thoſe Churches, after his being ennobled with Chains for the Chriſtian Faith, and his going to offer up himſelf a Sacrifice, for the Teſtimony of Jeſus, the Spirit of Prophecy, which he had upon him. In the three preceeding Tracts, we find the Prophets,

gerat,

termed the *Veſſels* of the Spirit, which is further explain'd to us, in the Term of *carrying* the Spirit, and which latter Term, is the ſame Word in *Greek*, that we render *moved* in that Text, wherein the Prophets are ſaid to be, 2 *Pet.* i. 21. *moved by the Holy Spirit*; it is but agreeable therefore with the Senſe of the Scripture Words in *Greek*, *Pneumatophoros*, *Pneumaticos*, (whereby the Prophet is denominated and deſcribed) and with the Expreſſions, uſed in the precedent Tracts, that *Ignatius* in theſe farewel Writings, always calls himſelf, *Theophoros*; that is, One *carrying* God, or *carried* (moved) of God; which ſeems to me, to mean no more, than what *Hermas* expreſſes, when he ſays, that a Man who *hath the Spirit* of God, carrieth, and is filled by an Angel, and ſo propheſies, as he is moved of God. And notwithſtanding the Abſurdity, which the modern Ages, or Age may conceive, of the Expreſſion, *One carrying God*, yet whoever will condeſcend to look into thoſe Times that were occular Witneſſes of Prophecy exiſtent, will find, that they were not offended with it, or ſaw that Impropriety, which now is imputed to the Expreſſion; for beſides all that has been elſwhere ſaid already on this Head, I beſeech thoſe who are capable, to look into Dr. *Mill's* New Teſtament in *Greek*, on 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. *Glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit which are God's*; the latter Part of that Verſe, they will there find, is wholly left out, by ſo many of the moſt ancient Manuſcripts of the Scripture, and in the Citation of that Text by ſeveral Fathers, as muſt afford ſufficient Ground to doubt, whether it was at all in the Original; and there alſo, they may find many great and ancient Authorities, thar read the former Part thus, Glorify and *carry God* in your Body: Wherefore here is a Proof, beyond the Power of Contradiction, that the moſt illuſtrious of the ancient Doctors of the Church, ſaw no Abſurdity at all, in the Expreſſion uſed by *Ignatius*, ſtiling himſelf, *One carrying God*. Nay, the *Vulgar Latin*, which is known to be one of the beſt Copies, of the New Teſtament Scripture, reads the ſame Text, to this Day, *glorify and carry God in your Bodies.*

§ 19. *Ignatius* for himſelf anſwering before *Trajan* the Emperor, for the very aſſuming that Word, *carrying God*, ſays, he had Chriſt within him; for ſays he, it is written, *I will dwell in them and walk in them*, and *Rev.* iii. 20. *If any Man open the Door, I will come in to him and ſup with him*; and the Apoſtle *Paul* ſays, *Chriſt liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20.

There-

Therefore thoſe that will wrangle about one of the Expreſſions, would do well to ſhew, the leſs Abſurdity of the other; and however, the Claim of *Ignatius* to that Denomination, might be but equally due to him with many more, before his Examination in the Emperor's Preſence; yet that very Profeſſion before *Trajan*, being the inſtantaneous Cauſe of his Condemnation, and the ſpecifick and only Charge, alledg'd in the Sentence pronounced againſt him, to be thrown for it, to the Beaſts, for the Delight of the People: This is Reaſon enough, to excuſe him from Vanity, in inſerting the ſame in thoſe Letters, written after he was going to Execution, for that very Expreſſion. Why therefore, ſhould it ſeem invidious to any, that the Holy Martyr ſhould wear a Lawrel, which he paid down the Price of his own Blood for, even as the Prophets uſed to do, for no leſs a Preſumption? And indeed I could further from Scripture, clear the ſaid Expreſſion from any Abſurdity; but I chooſe to conclude, with an Exhortation, to all that have Sobriety in the Faith of Chriſt, or indeed of any Revelation; not to be haſty with their Mouths, to pronounce, that this Man died as a Fool or Madman, when he died expreſly for openly confeſſing, that he did carry, or was carried of God.

§ 20. If the Remark of Dr. *Mills*, in his Preface to the New Teſtament, be well founded, that there was much Difference between the Copies of the ſacred Text, that were for the publick Uſe of the Churches, and thoſe that remained in the Hands of private Men; for ſays he "the "latter preſently became ſcrabled with Interlineations and "Marginal Gloſſes, which were ſoon by a ſecond Tranſ- "criber, either intermixed with the ſacred Text, or even "ſometimes, the inſpired Words themſelves were juſtled "out, and the ſpurious Supputation put in the Place there- "of, by the Ignorance, or thro' a worſe Diſpoſition of the "Writer." The above ſaid Way of arguing, I take to be a ſort of preſumptive Demonſtration of Fact; and therefore as the Epiſtles of *Ignatius* were certainly, not uſed in the publick Miniſtry of the Church, and their being written by an inſpired Perſon, affording alſo more Reaſon of corrupting them, than Writings meerly Human; I dare not build any thing on them, further, than as affording a Proof of his own claim to the Spirit of Prophecy, and as the preliminary Diſcourſe has aſſerted, his ſuppoſing of the ſame in others, to whom he wrote; for as to the Variations in the

the Copies of them, my own Eyes are Witneſſes to it, in a Paſſage in that to the *Philadelphians*, which according to *Voſſius* runs thus; " altho' ſays he, ſome would have me " deceived according to the Fleſh; yet, the Spirit I have, " is not deceiv'd, for I receiv'd it from God, and it knows " both whence it came, and whether it goes, and *reprov-* " *eth Secrets*; for I cryed out with a loud Voice among " thoſe to whom I ſpake, uttering not my own Words, " but thoſe of God; the *Biſhops*, and *Presbyters*, and *Dea-* " *cons* being preſent. But ſome deſpiſed me (or mocked " at me) as if I ſpake as knowing beforehand; a Diviſion " ariſing among them: But whilſt I ſo ſpake, He is Wit- " neſs to me, for whoſe Sake I am in Bonds, that I had " it not, from the Mouth of Man, but the Spirit ſpoke " it, to me."

§ 21. But without entangling my ſelf among the Briars and Thorns of diſputable Copies, I ſhall now follow that of the *Engliſh* Tranſlation before us, upon the Two Heads of his own Prophetick Inſpiration, and that by him ſuppoſed in others. As to that upon himſelf, the Stile of *Theophoros*, and the Inſtance above given, are both manifeſt Declarations; and yet he adds further, in that to the *Trallians*; " Am not I able to write to you of Heavenly " Things? But I forbear, leſt ye as Babes in Chriſt, " ſhould not be able to receive them; for even I my ſelf " am not able to underſtand Heavenly Things, ſuch as " the Orders of the Angels, and the ſeveral Companies " of them, under their reſpective Princes; but in theſe, I " am yet a Learner; (in other Places he tells us) I have " great Knowledge in God, but I refrain my ſelf, leſt I " ſhould periſh in my Boaſting; for I ought now the more " to fear, and not hearken to thoſe that would puff me up. " There is not any Fire within me, that affects (or faſtens " upon) material Things, but (there is) *living and ſpring-* " *ing Water, ſaying within me*, &c. Thus alſo, my Mouth " is without Deceit, and the Father hath truly ſpoken by " it." And ſeveral other Expreſſions there are of like Sort, which if they be not allow'd for Evidences of his being a Man of the Spirit, or *Pneumaticos*, I cannot underſtand them; eſpecially that in his Epiſtle to the *Trallians*, *Woe to that Man, thro' whoſe Vanity my Name is blaſphemed by any.*

§ 22. And if the Prophetick Spirit be manifeſted upon him, from ſuch Paſſages above, the like muſt be from the

ſame provable alſo, upon others. Thus to the Church at *Epheſus*, he ſays, " Ye are the Stones of the Temple of the " Father, prepared for his Building by the Holy Spirit, " being *Carriers of God*, ſpiritual Temples, *carrying Chriſt*, " poſſeſſing the Word of Jeſus. In particular there is among " you, my Fellow-Servant *Burrhus*, your Deacon, bleſſed in " all Things after God: Let us therefore do all Things, as " becomes thoſe who have God *dwelling in them*, that we " may be his Temples, and He in us, may be our God: " And why do we ſuffer our ſelves fooliſhly to periſh, not " knowing the Gift extraordinary, which the Lord hath " truly ſent us. In like Manner alſo, he adviſes the " Church of *Magneſians*, to look upon no Man after the " Fleſh, but to yield all Reverence to their Biſhop, preſi- " ding in the Place of God, according to the Power of " God the Father (on him) ſubmitting not to him, but to " the Father of Jeſus Chriſt, the Biſhop of all; and he, " who does not ſo, deceives not the Biſhop whom he ſees, " but juggles with the *Inviſible One*: Let us therefore be " found the Followers of Jeſus Chriſt, our ſole Inſtructor, for " ye have *Jeſus Chriſt in your ſelves*, and I know ye are *full* " *of God*, poſſeſſing his inſeparable Spirit, which is Jeſus " Chriſt; and thus is your Presbytery a Spiritual Crown. " With the like Expreſſions, he ſalutes the Church of the " *Trallians* in its Fulneſs, and Apoſtolick Character, exhort- " ing them to ſubmit to their Presbytery, as to the Apo- " ſtles (Meſſengers extraordinary) of Jeſus Chriſt. In like " manner let all reverence the Deacons, as Jeſus Chriſt, " (himſelf;) and after the ſame Sort, he ſays, the Miniſters " of the Church of *Philadelphia*, were manifeſted and ſettled " by the holy Spirit according to the Will and Mind of " Chriſt; for I know the Biſhop obtained that publick " Miniſtry of his, not of himſelf, neither by Men, but by " the Love of God the Father, and Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; " wherefore, do nothing but according to Chriſt's Inſtru- " ction." Upon which Evidences, I conceive there is competent Proof, that the Gifts extraordinary continued in thoſe Churches, becauſe the Expreſſions are ſcarce (if at all) accountable for, in any other Senſe.

§ 23. We have no Need to look into the Epiſtle of *Ignatius*, to the Church, at *Rome*, for Proof of the Spirit of Prophecy exiſting there, becauſe we have had it in the Inſtances of *Clement* and *Hermas*; nor into That, to the Church at *Smyrna*, becauſe touching that, there will follow

here

here, ſupernumerary Teſtimonies of the ſame, in the Perſon of *Polycarp*: Let us then proceed to the Account of the Martyrdom of St. *Ignatius*, written by thoſe who accompanied him from *Antioch*, and were preſent at his Conflict with, and being devour'd by Beaſts, in the Theater at *Rome*; "He was, ſay they, a Man in all Things like "unto the Apoſtles, and in the Church where he lived, "was after the Manner of a Divine Lamp (or Candle) "illuminating every Man's Heart, by the Expoſition of "the Holy Scriptures (which is certainly one peculiar Gift "of the Spirit of Prophecy;) and whilſt we paſſed, ſay "they, on our Voyage to *Rome*, they flocked from all "Parts to ſee him, if by any Means, they might receive "ſome Participation of the Spiritual Gift (on him, which "ſhews, that ſometimes the ſame was communicated) "and when we came to *Rome*, and he ſaluted the Brethren, he knew by the Spirit, the Intentions of ſome of "them; the Night after his Suffering, we were together "*watching in Prayer*, that God would vouchſafe us (weak "Men) ſome Aſſurance of what had paſſed; whereupon ſeveral in the Company fell into a Slumber, (extatical becauſe *watching in Prayer*) and therein ſaw Viſions, wherein "*Ignatius* was repreſented; which when we had conferr'd "together, we glorified God, the Giver of all good Things, "being thereby aſſured of his Bleſſedneſs." Dr. *Grabe* indeed gives ſome Reaſons (ſays the Preface) to render it probable, that this latter Part might be ſupputed to the Original; but as no Copies are mention'd, to be without it (except one) we have no Warrant to reject the Paragraph.

§ 24. Having now given Evidences of Prophecy, abounding in the Chriſtian Church, out of the reſt of thoſe Writings, which together with the New Teſtament, make up a compleat Collection of the moſt Primitive Antiquity, for about 150 Years after Chriſt; we cloſe, with ſome Obſervations, taken from that of the Martyrdom of St. *Polycarp*, who ſuffer'd for his gracious Maſter and ours, *Anno* 147. the Account of which was written, in a Circular Letter by the Church of *Smyrna*, directed to all the Aſſemblies of the Church, in every Place; and of ſuch Eſteem for many Ages, that it was wont to be read publickly in the Churches, for their Edification; and the Copy thereof, uſed by Biſhop *Uſher*, is ſo well atteſted, that we need not (ſays our Preface) any further Aſſurance of the Truth

of it. This Letter then, giving an Account of ſeveral other Martyrs, dying at the ſame Time with *Polycarp*, ſays, " That whilſt they were under the Torments, they were " *abſent from the Body*, (probably under the Extatical Im- " preſſions) or rather the Lord Chriſt ſtood by them, and " converſed with them, and revealed Things to them, " inconceivable by Man, as if they were no longer Men, " but already become Angels. As to *Polycarp*, he ſaw a " Viſion three Days before he was taken; and behold, the " Pillow under his Head, he ſaw all in a Flame, whereup- " on, turning to thoſe about him, he ſaid prophetically, " I ſhall be burnt alive; after his Apprehenſion, whilſt he " was going into the Place of Execution, there came a " Voice from Heaven, ſaying, *Be ſtrong, and quit thy ſelf* " *like a Man*, Polycarp. Now no one ſaw who ſpoke to " him, but many of our Brethren preſent, heard the " Voice; then *Polycarp looking ſternly round on the People,* " *ſhaking his Hand at them, with a deep Groan, and with a* " *Mouth but half open*, as One who ſpoke not his own " Words, but thoſe of another, (by *Uſher*'s Copy) looking " up to Heaven, ſaid, *Take away the Wicked:* Then having " made a large Confeſſion of Chriſt, he was filled with " Confidence and Joy, inſomuch that his very Countenance " was ſo full of Grace, (Brightneſs,) that the Proconſul " was ſtruck with Aſtoniſhment: And when the Flames " encompaſſed his Body, we ſtanding by, perceiv'd ſo " ſweet a Smell, iſſuing thence, as if Frankincenſe, or " ſome rich Spices had been ſmoking there. Such was the " End of *Polycarp*, who in our Times, was a truly Apoſto- " lical and Prophetical Teacher; for every Word that went " out of his Mouth, either has been already fulfill'd, or " will be: And thus he now with Angels glorifies God, " and bleſſeth our Lord, *the Governour of our Bodies*, and " Shepherd of the univerſal Church on Earth. This Epi- " ſtle was tranſcribed from the Copy of *Iræneus*, the Di- " ciple of *Polycarp*, by *Caius*: After which, I *Pionius* wrote " it from the ſaid Copy, which I found, by a Revelation, " wherein *Polycarp* appear'd, and directed me to it, as I " have, and do declare in a moſt ſolemn Manner.". The whole Tenor of this Epiſtle gives ſo many clear Proofs of Revelation in thoſe Days, and of the Faith of many Ages of thoſe Proofs by their reading it in Publick, that it needs no more any explanatory Coment, than it can want Aſſu- rance of its Veracity, in the Relation of Facts.

CHAP

CHAP. II.

Of PROPHECY *uncontroverted, in the* SECOND CENTURY.

§ 1. HItherto we have produced Proof, of the Prophecy, exiſtent after the Deceaſe of the Apoſtles, from ſuch Writings of the very Prophets themſelves, as were generally acknowledg'd for Divine by the Church, for three or four Centuries; which were moſt of them placed, among the other ſacred Records of the New Teſtament, and are found, even to this Day, enrolled together with them, in ſome of the moſt ancient and moſt eſteem'd Copies thereof in Manuſcript. Henceforth indeed, the Evidences to be given, of Prophetick Inſpiration, for the publick Edification of the Church, will not be taken from any remaining Writings of ſuch Prophets, yet ſurviving; but from the concurrent Teſtimonies, not of ſome few Authors obſcure, and of little Note, but of many and even moſt of the now ſurviving Writings of the primitive Fathers, in the Church before *Conſtantine*; ſuch as were the brighteſt Ornaments thereof for Piety, and the moſt able, and fervently induſtrious, to vindicate and evince the Truth of Chriſt, by their Writings; againſt both the *Heathen* and *Jews* on the one hand, and continually ariſing Errors among *Chriſtians*, on the other.

§ 2. Whilſt therefore we are ſearching after *Truth*, even the ſame and no other than That, *which was once deliver'd to the Saints*; and looking into the Foundations of it, as they were laid and *built upon the Prophets and Apoſtles, Jeſus Chriſt being the chief Corner-ſtone*; we conceive the clear Teſtimonies of it on this Point of the Divine Preſence of Chriſt with his Church, by the various Exertions of the Spirit of Prophecy, among the Houſhold of Faith; drawn from the yet ſubſiſting Accord of the moſt primitive Times of Chriſtianity, ſignified by the Concurrence of moſt of the ableſt Writers before *Conſtantine*, that are expreſs and clear in this Matter. Such Teſtimonies I conceive, to be abundantly ſufficient, eſpecially if we conſider, that however theſe Writings handed down to us of thoſe Authors, may have been probably corrupted in ſome Points, ſuch as After-Ages have been very prone to favour; yet ſeeing, for at leaſt 1200 Years paſt, there has been little Diſpoſition among the

Learned, to contribute any Thing, towards the Encouragement of Enthuſiaſm; we have leſs Reaſon to ſuſpect any Adulteration of thoſe Authors, upon this Head, than on ſome others, whereof latter Ages have been paſſionately fond. But as to this preſent Subject of Prophetick Inſpiration, and Divine Revelation any ways continuing in the Church; I am aware, that ſome Men are ſo willingly deaf and blind, that poſſibly they will rather reject all Authorities, and deny the Validity of the moſt authentick, (even ſuch as in other Points, they would gladly acquieſce in) than ever admit them in this: As to ſuch Men, I beſeech them by the Bowels of Chriſt, to conſider, that in this remote State of Ages, wherein we now are, there is not any Manuſcript Copy of the New Teſtament ſacred Writ ſurviving to us, ſo antient, as the Writings of thoſe Authors were, which we are now to quote: And therefore, thoſe that know any Thing fully, do know, that for Proof of the ſacred Text of Scripture it ſelf, the Editions of it have had Recourſe to theſe very Monuments of Antiquity, upon which we are now to build Evidences, touching Matters of Fact, that paſſed in thoſe diſtant Ages: And I hope this very Conſideration of the venerable Authority of thoſe Monuments, if the Importance of it be duly weighed, may incline them to lend an Ear, to the Report of them, in this very Caſe alſo, whereof we treat.

§ 3. 'Tis true, that beſides the Teſtimony of thoſe antient Chriſtian Doctors, drawn from their Signification of what they knew, ſaw, or heard, ſeverally in their Day; we muſt have Recourſe to Secondary Writers, ſuch as *Euſebius* the Hiſtorian of Times, preceding his own. This ought however to be allow'd alſo, becauſe it is that kind of Teſtimony, which in all other Things, we build our Knowledge of Things paſs'd upon. Now, every one who has, or will inquiſitively look into this Affair, knows or may know, that no Man could have greater Opportunity, of collecting authentick Evidences of Fact, to compile a Hiſtory than *Euſebius* had. And ſince it appears, that he uſed many Books, from whence to draw his Chronology, which are long ſince periſhed, and nothing to be found of them, but their Mention in his. We ſhall ſay no more, than that he was a Reporter of Affairs, far from being inclined to ſpeak partially in Favour of what, we are here to repreſent from him. Now, beſides the Report of thoſe Authors teſtifying of their own Times, and that of the Hiſtorian

ſtorian of preceding ones, there will be mixed with the following Relation of Facts, the Comments and Affirmations of ſome very eminent Divines, of our own Age; concerning which latter, without further branching into their ſeveral Characters, or medling with any Thing of the Argument of their Writings, more than what concerns the Proof and Illuſtration of Facts, in the Point we are upon. I could wiſh, that Men would be content to let every Cauſe ſtand upon its own Foot, and not intermix their Paſſions of Affection or Averſion, to this or that Author, and thereby ſuffer their Judgment, to take any Byaſs thence. I have uſed ſuch, as providentially came to my Hand, and I am ſure, the living Age will allow them to be, in the firſt Rank among the Learned in Chriſtian Antiquities; and I believe alſo, that none can charge them with any Favour to a *culpable Enthuſiaſm*; ſeeing the expreſs Deſign of thoſe Books of theirs, I make Quotations from, was to oppoſe and convince of Guilt, what they judged to be of that kind, and is commonly eſteem'd for ſuch.

§ 4. We for our Part, cannot pretend to have ſearched into the Antiquities of the Chriſtian Church, in any kind of Degree, that ſhould enable to give a full Account of the Subject hereof from thence, but do tender here, poſſibly, but a little Part of what a Student therein might furniſh: Wherefore it will appear, that what is ſubjoined touching it, is drawn from a very little reading concerning that Matter. However, until a more accurate Search, by ſome who are better qualify'd for it, we are to underſtand, that tho' there ſubſiſt no more authentick Prophetical Writings for 150 Years after Chriſt, than thoſe above-mention'd in the laſt Chapter; and beſides the Number indefinite, which thoſe Books intimate to be extraordinarily inſpir'd, or authoriſed to declare Revelations to the Church, in the ſeveral Cities whereof they treat, we find ſeveral ſpecified by Name, during the ſaid Term: As for Example; the Four Daughters of *Philip*, which did propheſie, *Acts* xxi. 9. and ſurvived unto this Time; the reſt of whom dy'd at *Hierapolis*, but one of them (ſaith *Euſebius*) reſteth at *Epheſus*; and of her he adds, that ſhe acted under the *Guidance of the Holy Spirit* in her Conduct, whereby the Continuance of that Gift upon her is ſignified. But yet more expreſly, *Lib.* iii. *Chap.* 37. touching the Evangeliſts, who then flouriſhed, he ſays, "Beſides the Daughters of "*Philip* forementioned, that ſhone brightly in that Gift,

" there were many others alſo, that were noted for it, and " in particular, *Quadratus*; and theſe are called Divine (or " inſpir'd) Diſciples, who built up the Churches in every " Place, where the Apoſtles had laid the Foundation; " who ſpread far and wide by their Preaching, the glad- " ſome Seed of the Goſpel, their Souls being inflamed " by the Heavenly Word; theſe alſo in performing the " Office of Evangeliſts, that is, of inſpir'd Preachers, left " their own homes, and paſs'd into far diſtant and barba- " rous Countries, where the Name of Chriſt had not yet " been heard of, and there laid other new Foundations, " and conſtituted ſtated Paſtors of thoſe Congregations, " by Impoſition of Hands: Theſe Evangeliſts then com- " mitted to them, the Care of the new Plantation, whilſt " themſelves ſtill advanced farther, to other Regions, with " *the Power and Grace of God* attending them; and *ſo great* " *was the Number of theſe Evangeliſts, that it is impoſſible* " *for us to rehearſe them all ſingly by Name.*" But the one Name of *Quadratus* Biſhop of *Athens*, ſerves to give us a little Light into the Time, whereof theſe Things are to be underſtood; for he lived to about the Year 125, and was ſo conſiderable, as to addreſs an Apology for the Chriſtian Faith, to the *Roman* Emperor.

§ 5. And altho' the *Names* are not eſſentially neceſſary, yet beca uſe they illuſtrate the Fact aſſerted in general; among th Rank of Prophetical Teachers alluded to, in the foregoing P aragraph, we find that of *Papias* (the Compa- nion of *Polyc.* *irp)* and *Amia*, a holy Woman of *Philadelphia*; *Papias* wrote Five Books explanatory of our Saviour's Ser- mons, for ſo th y were entitled, *(Nicephorus* ſays, he want- ed none of thoſe Gifts uſual in this Time) and he himſelf ſealed the Faith f Chriſt with his own Blood, *Anno* 133. But as I doubt not, there are many now-a-days, who are ready to join with *Euſebius*, in charging this Man with Error, becauſe he ini ſted on the Doctrine of *New Hea- vens* and a *New Earth* t come, I ſhall add what in his Vin- dication Dr. *Grabe* has a irmed *(Spicil.* Part. I. p. 31, *&c.)* " All the Primitive Chriſt ians, ſays he, that were found in " the Faith, did expect a New Heaven and New Earth, " according to the Words o f the Apoſtles, and Promiſes " of the Prophets: And tha , at the Second Coming of " the *Meſſiah*, theſe ſhould be reſtored to their Original " Felicity, before the Fall of *Adam*: And the moſt did " place this Felicity, not to reſide only, in Spiritual Things, " but

" but in Temporal too; being perſwaded, that the very " Soil ſhould be freed from the Curſe, laid upon it for the " Sin of *Adam*, and ſhould be plenteouſly productive of " all good Things, without human Labour." I will ſuppoſe then, that this may ſuffice for a Vindication of *Papias*; and if there needs any more to make good the general Affirmation of Dr. *Grabe*, there is abundantly enough to be collected from other Antiquaries, to ſhew the ſame, not only to be the Faith of the Antients; but that the Hope built upon this particular Subject of their Faith, was one Principle, ſpecially moving them, to triumph over Death in Martyrdom, as *Papias* did. However, here we have a Taſte of our Hiſtorian's favouring that Principle, whereon the *Greek* Churches did univerſally ſoon after him, (as already mentioned) reject the Inſpiration of the *Revelations* of St. *John*, as well as he herein calumniated, one of his immediate Diſciples.

§ 6. As to the Chronology, we do not pretend in any Part of the enſuing Relation to be exact: But it ſeems ſomewhat remarkable, that thoſe who have ſtudied much to be punctual in Time, do make the inſpir'd Daughters of *Philip* to ſurvive to *Anno* 120. (at leaſt 60 Years after they are ſaid in *Acts* xxi. 9. to propheſy.) Wherefore, doubtleſs, ſome one or other of them, muſt have been but of an Infant Age, when they firſt did ſo. *Quadratus* is alſo by others thought to have liv'd, paſt the Year of Chriſt, 140. And about *Anno* 155. *Melito* Biſhop of *Sardis*, an Eunuch, is expreſly ſaid, to have *done all Things by the Inſpiration of the Holy Spirit*, Euſeb. *lib.* v. 24. which we muſt underſtand to mean no more than the frequent Directions of it: And if ſo, how great is the Loſs to the Chriſtian World, that nothing now remains of them, but the Titles of Twenty Tracts, written by him; whereof one was concerning the Prophets, and another upon Prophecy it ſelf? Thus therefore, we have a few Names of the moſt celebrated Prophets, that were reſident in the fixed Churches; tho' as to the Number of Apoſtolick ones, who travell'd far from home, and laid the Foundations of Chriſtian Societies in many Parts; and had probably greater Gifts of the Spirit attending them; theſe, tho' the moſt honourable, yet without any Memorial of Honour perſonally to themſelves, for their Heroic Employment, have left us however clear Matter for concluding, That the ſpreading of Chriſtianity, and the firſt ſowing and planting of it, was perform-

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ed by the Spirit extraordinarily upon ſuch; and by its immediate Orders too, as to St. *Paul*, and not by human Oratory of Teaching, or human Meaſures. But that we may have the more diſtinct Idea of the Gift of Propheſying or Inſpir'd Preaching in thoſe Days, I ſhall here ſubjoin the ſeveral Accounts of it, given by two Perſons well known in our Age, and both very well acquainted with the Hiſtory of theſe Times, whereof now we Treat.

§ 7. The very Learned Mr. *Dodwell*, in the Preface to his *Diſſertations*, on *Irenæus* ſays, " That even the Apoſtles or " Prophets of the higheſt Rank, were not under Inſpirati- " on at their own pleaſure or choice; neither are we to take " all they ſaid or did, for Divine Oracles; but then only, " when the Spirit was upon them. And who is there that " can be ſo ignorant, as not to know, that there were di- " vers Degrees of Prophecy, and very different, in one and " the ſame Gift of the Prophetic Spirit; nay, there was " difference in reſpect to Certainty (in the very Act of " Propheſying) of one Perſon more than another; for thus " the New Teſtament ſeems to bear it, in thoſe ſeveral " Texts wherein Apoſtles are mention'd to be not only di- " ſtinguiſhed from Prophets, but in their Gifts ſuperior; " as where St. *Paul* gives out his Doctrine for a Standard " to the common Prophets, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 37. *If any one ſeem-* " *eth to be a Prophet or Spiritual Man, let him acknowledge* " *that the Things I write unto you, are the Commandments of* " *the Lord.* And thus when he ſays, That he *received his* " *Apoſtleſhip by the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, no One can " doubt, but he there means, the Gift of *Prophecy*, where- " in he claims to be equal with the *very Chiefeſt* Apoſtles; " by which Expreſſion is intimated, that not only the " common Degree of that Gift among the Prophets, was " inſufficient to denominate an Apoſtle, but that among " thoſe that were Apoſtles, there might be Difference too: " Wherefore, altho' many in the Second Century had the " Gift of Prophecy, it does not thence neceſſarily follow, " that therein they were equal to the Apoſtles. And that " there was Degrees alſo of Eminence, among the very " Apoſtles in that Gift, appears from the Terms uſed " concerning them, *Gal.* ii. 6, 9. ſeemed to be *ſomewhat*, " ſeem'd to be *Pillars*, 2 Cor. xi. 5. *Great Apoſtles*, xii. 11. " *above meaſure Apoſtles.* And thus 'tis ſaid, *Deut.* xxxiv. 10, " *there aroſe not a Prophet ſince in Iſrael like unto Moſes*, whom " the Lord knew Face to Face; nevertheleſs, ſuch was the

Oeco-

" Oeconomy of Divine Appointment, in the Myſtical Bo-
" dy, that the leſs noble Members were neceſſary even to
" the more noble, and that in the Communion of Spiritual
" Gifts alſo. Thus the Spirit ſpake to St. *Paul*, in his
" Journey towards *Jeruſalem*, by *Agabus*, and other Pro-
" phets, of particular Churches: And if Prophecy in any
" one particular Perſon, deſerved Regard, the Unity and
" Concurrence of the Spirit of Prophecy, in few or more
" Perſons, added proportionable Weight, in any Point:
" Wherefore, if God had thought fit, the Spirit prophe-
" ſying latter than the Age of Apoſtles, might have gi-
" ven forth Rules and Injunctions, new and unknown to
" the Apoſtles, which ought to have been acknowledg'd,
" for Divine Revelation; and even ſo, there is no Fear of
" innovating in the Chriſtian Faith, altho' we do acknow-
" ledge the Propheſying in the Primitive Ages of the
" Church, to be *equally ſuch* (that is, equally true, or from
" the Divine Spirit) with thoſe of the Apoſtles; ſeeing
" nothing contrary, or inconſiſtent with the Apoſtolical, is
" by them deliver'd."

§ 8. Wherefore, in his Second *Diſſertation*, the ſame Author adds, " Among the firſt Fruits of the Spirit, *Cle-*
" *ment*, *Hermas*, *Ignatius* and *Polycarp* are to be account-
" ed; and their Writings ought to be eſteem'd, tho' not
" equal to the Apoſtolical, yet for *Divine*; as of *Prophets*,
" in a Rank inferior to them, and ſuch as are far to be
" preferr'd, above all human Writings. As to Directi-
" on and Government of particular Churches, whilſt the
" Prophetick Gifts remained, *there could be no one uninſpi-*
" *red, ſet over the Prophets to preſcribe to them*; *Ignatius* takes
" Notice, that in the Church of *Smyrna*, every kind of
" the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit ſubſiſted, and there-
" fore Prophecy, and the diſcerning of Spirits were among
" the reſt, and this kept all Errors from venting them-
" ſelves: *Papias* witneſſes, that even the Gift of Miracles
" continued, in the Place where he reſided, and *Epipha-*
" *nius* mentions a *Roman* Governour converted elſewhere,
" *Anno* 136. by the great Evidence of the Gift of Heal-
" ing. *Polycarp* was by a miraculous Voice, ſtrengthen'd
" under his laſt Conflict, and the Believers ſtanding by,
" were comforted, by the fragrant Odour they ſmelt: But
" as to Miracles, there were ſome Heretical Teachers, who
" pretended to authoriſe their Errors by them: And in
" that Danger of the Faithful, the Spirit being always
" preſent

" preſent in the Guidance of the Church, did *admoniſh*
" them of their Duty, and what to do; as by the Gift of
" diſcerning Spirits, and that of Prophecy, has already
" been hinted: And thus the *Elect* were preſerv'd, from
" the Danger predicted to ariſe from Miracles." (The latter Clauſe about Miracles, is the Subject of divers Pages, in the Author.)

§ 9. Dr. *George Hicks*, another Perſon, well verſed in the Antiquities of the Chriſtian Church, in a Tract call'd, *Enthuſiaſm Exorcis'd*, the Fourth Edition, 1709. gives us the following Account of them: " When our Lord left
" the World, ſays he, he ſent his Spirit as his Vicar, or
" Vicegerent, to aſſiſt and teach them, in his Abſence,
" as St. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were inſtructed by Inſpiration,
" or other Revelations of the Holy Spirit, who ſupplied
" the Place of Chriſt: And in the *Differences of Adminiſtra-*
" *tions*, that is, of Miniſtries or Miniſters, the Apoſtles
" ſtood firſt; concerning which *Spiritual or inſpir'd Perſons*
" the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* xii. 1. Theſe Gifts inſpir'd,
" were given to the Apoſtles and other Diſciples, in ſeve-
" ral Meaſures, and the *Word of Wiſdom or Knowledge* ena-
" bled to teach and interpret the Allegorical and Typical
" Myſteries of the Old Teſtament, as they related to the E-
" vangelical State, and to expound the Prophetical Paſſages
" of it: This Gift *of Underſtanding, teaching and applying the*
" *Scriptures of the Old Teſtament*, was one of the moſt noble of
" the Prophetical Gifts. It was by Virtue of this Gift, which
" St. *Peter* and *Paul* had from the Spirit, that they open'd
" and apply'd, in all their Epiſtles, and expounded and teſti-
" fied the Kingdom of God to the *Jews*; and even by the
" Fulneſs of this prophetical Gift, Chriſt Himſelf *(who had*
" *not the Spirit by Meaſure)* frequently open'd the Scrip-
" ture. To this Gift, is *originally owing*, that Interpreta-
" tion of Scripture, uſed by the antient Chriſtian Writers,
" which tho' not found in the New Teſtament Writings,
" had been ſo applied and explained, by inſpir'd Miniſters,
" in the Times of Inſpiration, and tranſmitted to them
" in Age after Age, for the Benefit of the Church: The
" Inſtances whereof are many, in the Tracts of *Clement*,
" *Barnabas*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, *Tertulli-*
" *an*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, and *Novatian*; and in particular ac-
" cording to them, the Pſalms are almoſt all apply'd to
" Chriſt and his Church; many or moſt of which Inter-
" pretations

" pretations are not found in the New Teſtament Scrip-
" tures, and yet are generally receiv'd, in ſome remarka-
" ble Texts; as for Inſtance, that of *Gen.* xlix. 10. *The*
" *Scepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from*
" *between his Feet, till Shiloh come.* By this *Prophetical Word*
" *of Knowledge*, other Books receiv'd among the *Jews*, were
" cited, beſides thoſe of their Canonical Scriptures; as
" *thoſe*, from which St. *Paul* quotes, the Magicians, *Jan-*
" *nes* and *Jambres*, that withſtood *Moſes*; and St. *Stephen*
" ſays, that *Moſes was learned in all the Wiſdom of the Ægyp-*
" *tians*, and was Forty Years of Age, when he viſited his
" Brethren, by a Revelation from God beforehand. Out
" of the ſame Books it was likely, that St. *Paul* ſays, *Mo-*
" *ſes exceedingly quaked*; and *Peter* and *Jude* mention the
" Fall of the Angels, from their firſt Station; and *Michael*
" *the Archangel contended with the Devil, about the Body of*
" *Moſes*; and the Prophecy of *Enoch* is cited, *Behold,*
" *the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his Saints*: This is
" the Prophetical Gift promiſed by *Iſa.* xi. 2. called the
" Spirit of Wiſdom and the Spirit of Knowledge. Thus,
" the Gift of underſtanding the ſecret and myſtical Senſe
" of the Scriptures in the New Teſtament, is called Wiſ-
" dom by St. *John*, *Rev.* xiii. 18. *Here is Wiſdom, let him*
" *that hath Underſtanding, count the Number of the Beaſt*;
" and in *Chap.* xvii. 19. here is the Mind that hath Wiſ-
" dom: In this Senſe, the antient Fathers do expreſs
" themſelves, as *Origen* in Anſwer to *Celſus* ſaith, He who
" is adorned with the Gift, which we call *the Word of*
" *Wiſdom*, can declare the Reaſon, why the Heavens were
" open'd unto Jeſus, and why the Spirit appear'd in the
" Likeneſs of a Dove, and of no other living Creature:
" This was one of the moſt noble Gifts, which the *Pneu-*
" *maticoi*, or Spiritual Miniſters enjoyed, by Inſpiration of
" the holy Spirit, and which was given to St. *Paul* imme-
" diately upon his Converſion, as appears *Acts* ix. 20, 22.
" and this is, what the Prayer of his refers to, *Eph.* i. 17.
" that God may give unto you, the *Spirit of Wiſdom and*
" *Revelation*, for the farther Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt:
" This Gift of teaching, interpreting and inſtructing out
" of the Scriptures, was common in the Churches, and
" the edifying Men who were inſpir'd with it, were call'd
" in the *Hebrew* Senſe of the Word, *Prophets*, that is,
" inſpir'd Miniſters or Teachers; and ſo we are to un-
" derſtand the Word, *Prophets*, in the New Teſta-
" ment, wherein *ſpeaking and propheſying by the Spirit*;

" ſigni-

" ſignifyeth Preaching; as in the Texts, every Man *pray-*
" *ing or propheſying, he that propheſyeth, ſpeaketh unto Men*
" *for Edification*, and ſuch like: And thus it was, that the
" fooliſh Things of the World, did out-argue and puzzle
" the Wiſe, when they ſpoke not in the Words, or Rea-
" ſons which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy
" Spirit teacheth."

§ 10. By the Report of theſe two Divines, the Manner and Quality of *Prophets and Teachers by the Spirit*, in the Chriſtian Church, is a little explain'd; therefore we ſhall now proceed, in the Proof of their continuing, by the peculiar Grace of Chriſt, to his Spouſe the Church: Firſt then, *Juſtin* the *Martyr* who ſealed the Truth with his own Blood about the Year 170. is a Man ſo well deſerving of the Chriſtian Commonwealth, by many Treatiſes in her Defence, againſt the *Jews*, and the *Heathen*, and the erronious in all kinds, that a more unreproachable Witneſs of any Matter cannot be. There were ſome Tracts of his that are periſhed, which might have given a more diſtinguiſhing Light into the Thing, now under Conſideration, as that of the Nature of Angels, and another concerning *Hymns*, and *an Expoſition of the Apocalypſe*: Touching theſe I ſhall only obſerve, that *Pliny* and other Authors mention, *ſacred Hymns* to be compoſed and ſung by the firſt Chriſtians: And as St. *Paul* joins the ſame, to the being filled with the Spirit, and calls them Inſpir'd Songs, the Tract of *Juſtinus*, might probably have given ſome Account of ſuch, for the Prophetick Spirit often has exerted it ſelf, in that Way; but at preſent it muſt ſuffice to us, that in the Works of his ſtill extant, he urges againſt the *Jews*, the Argument of the Prophetick Spirit exiſtent in the Church, as a Proof inconteſtible, of the the Truth of Chriſtianity; for, ſays he, " Ye may among us SEE both
" Women and Men, having the Gifts of the Spirit of God,
" which was among you of old, and has of long Time
" ceaſed; wherein ſays Mr. *Dodwell* (*Diſſert. Cyp.*) there is
" an Appeal to *Ocular Demonſtration of the Spirit's Agency*,
" as *Gal.* iii. 1, 2. before whoſe Eyes Jeſus Chriſt hath
" been evidently ſet forth, in your receiving of the Spirit,
" extraordinarily; and then in the Courſe of his Argu-
" ment, *Juſtin* challenges them, the *Jews*, to hear the
" Words of Prophecy and Doctrine (in the Name of
" Chriſt) as a Demonſtration of his Power yet exiſting,
" that they might alſo believe; and at the ſame Time,

" goes

" goes on largely to upbraid them, that they would rather " blindly adhere to their *Rabbins* Traditions, than liſten " to what the Spirit of Prophecy from God, *now ſpake*; " for ſays he, the Gifts of Prophecy are among us unto " this Day. Wherefore, rightly doth *Euſebius* report of " *Juſtin Martyr*, that he affirmed, *the Gift of Prophecy ſhone* " *brightly in the Church, in his Time.*"

§ 11. And as *Juſtin* thus boldly aſſerted the Fact unto the *Jews*, the Inference is clear, that the Prophetick Spirit, whenſoever juſtified by the Harmony of his precedent Word, ought in all Times to be obeyed, whenever He ſo ſpeaks: Therefore the *Jews* were then culpable, and without Excuſe, in not ſubmitting to it, above 120 Years after Chriſt's Deceaſe, as well as in rejecting Him, when alive; but the ſame Chriſtian Hero, in his Apology to the Emperor *Antoninus Pius*, p. 67. inſiſts on the ſame Topick to the *Heathen*, ſaying, " When ye hear the Words of Prophets, " do not ye think, that the Perſon whom the Spirit inſpireth, " ſpeaks, but the Divine Word that moves him; whether " it be, that the Words ſpoken are, in the Perſon of God " the Father of all, or in that of Chriſt, or as in his own " Perſon, or as repreſenting the People in their arguing." Moreover, 'tis very obſervable, that not only in this Author, but by many Authors, during the Time that the Spirit of Prophecy was acknowledg'd to reſide in the Church, and the Manner of his Operation, better known, than by the preſumptuous Ages, that are without any ſuch Inſtruction; the *violent Agitations*, notorious on the *Sybils*, and their not underſtanding what they ſpake, during the Extacy, was no ſufficient Objection to determine againſt the Divinity of their Inſpiration; as may be ſeen (among many other antient Authorities) in *Juſtin*'s Exhortation to the *Greeks*, p. 35. wherein he declares himſelf ſatisfied, that ſome of the *Sybils were divinely actuated and inſpir'd*; and in *p.* 9. he deſcribes the Prophetick Influence by the Metaphor of a Muſician's Hand, touching the Strings of a Harp or Spinnet (which is a Motion viſible) for, " thus (ſays he) the Divine Agent the Spirit, in his communicated " Operation, affects the Man as an Inſtrument, to ſound " forth and declare the Knowledge of Heavenly Things " to us, which otherwiſe were above our Reach to at- " tain.

§ 12. A

§ 12. A little after *Justin Martyr, viz.* about *Anno Christi*, 180. *Athenagoras*, who was commission'd by the Christians, to carry another Apology in their Name to the Emperor, says in it, " The Spirit of Prophecy gives his Assent to " our Prayer, for the Holy Spirit pours out prophetical " Words, in those on whom He operates; I call them " Prophets, who being *out of themselves*, and their own " Thoughts, did utter forth, whatsoever by the *impelling* " *Power* of the Spirit He wrought in them; whilst the " Divine Operator served Himself of them, or their Or- " gans, even as Men do of a Trumpet, blowing thro' it: " Thus have we Prophets, for Witnesses and Affirmers " of our Faith, and is it not equal and worthy of human " Reason, O ye Emperors, to yield up our Faith to the " Divine Spirit, who *moves the Mouths* of the Prophets, as " his Instruments: We exhort you therefore, to cease " from human Perswasions." From all which, it is plain, that the Christians did insist both with *Jews* and *Infidels*, upon their Priviledge, of Inspiration Prophetick continuing among them; and about the same Time, *Eusebius, lib.* 5. 1. gives us the Copy of a memorable Epistle from the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vienne*, which yields an Account of divers Martyrs in their Country: In particular, " that " there was one *Vetius Epagathus*, who is mention'd, to be " *fervent in the Spirit, and transported with vehement Emoti-* " *on, having in himself the Paracleet*, even the Spirit in great- " er abundance than *Zacharias* the Father of *John Baptist*; " and whilst they advanced joyfully to lay hold of the " Crown of Martyrdom, the Standers-by smelt the fra- " grant Odour of Christ, as if their Bodies had been per- " fumed with odoriferous Ointment: In particular, again " *Alexander* a *Phrygian*, exceedingly encourag'd those He- " roick Champions, in their last Conflict for the Faith; " for this Man, by Profession a Physician, was well known " in *France*, for his great Zeal to God, and his bold " Preaching; for he was endowed with the Apostolical " Gifts of the Spirit. In the same Church also, there was " one *Alcibiades*, who had used himself to great Morti- " fication, that he might enjoy the more Communion with " God; who was directed by a Message from Heaven, " given in a Vision, signifying that he was in the wrong, " to accustom himself to Bread and Water only, and bid " him to use other of God's Creatures lawfully.

§ 13. By

§ 13. By the laſt mention'd Inſtances, and ſeveral preceding ones, it appears that the *Spirit of Prophecy* proved a Seed of new riſing Churches, as well in powerfully ſcattering the Blood of Martyrs, as in its prevalent Operation, upon the Auditors of its Sermons: And the Chain of Proofs, of the Continuance thereof, with the Church, having already reached near the End of the Second Century, we ſhall add but one Link more, to compleat that Period; *Irenæus* Biſhop of *Lyons* who fell aſleep *Anno Chriſti*, 192. was a Star too bright and ſhining, in the clear Hemiſphere of the Church, for any one, the leaſt acquainted with Books, to need a further Character of him, before he be admitted, a credible Evidence in this Cauſe; I ſhall only take Notice, that *Epiphanius* (*lib.* i. *Tom.* 2. *p.* 205.) ſays, that *Irenæus himſelf was compleatly adorned with the Gifts of the Spirit*; and if ſo, we muſt allow, that tho' his own Modeſty would not ſuffer him, in his large Writings, in Behalf of the Truth, as it is in Jeſus, to declare that; yet, he bears a luminous Teſtimony, to the ſame Grace of Chriſt, and Fellowſhip of the Holy Spirit, plentiful in others; for whoever pleaſes, may read more of his Words on this Subject (*lib.* ii. *cap.* 56, 57, 58.) But here it may ſuffice to obſerve, that ſpeaking of the notorious Hereticks, *Simon Magus* and *Carpocrates*, who were reported to work Miracles, he goes on to ſhew the Difference between their Operations, and the true Chriſtian's, and then adds; " they are far from doing any " thing like unto raiſing of the Dead, as our Savi- " our did, and the Apoſtles by Prayer did, and among the " Brethren often, when the whole Church in any Place " uſing much Supplication and Faſting have beſought " it, the Spirit of the Dead returned, and the Man is " given in, to the Prayers of the Saints. But if ſome Men " ſay ſcoffingly, that the Lord has performed theſe things " *phantaſtically*, (I ſuppoſe he means the uſual and well " known Appearances on the Prophet) we on this Point, " appealing unto Prophetical Things, ſhall demonſtrate " from them, that all Things that were predicted and " affirmed touching the Lord, were performed after a *like* " *Manner*: Wherefore, He being the only Son of God, " by his Name, thoſe that are indeed his Diſciples, receiv- " ing Grace from Him, do now perform to the Benefit of " other Men, according as every one has receiv'd the

" Gift from Him; for ſome do caſt out Devils, truly and " effectually, ſo that thoſe who are cleanſed from the Im- " pure Spirits, they themſelves are converted to the Faith, " and abide in the Church: Others have Fore-knowledge " of Things future, and have Viſions, *and the Gift of Pro-* " *pheſying*: Others, by Impoſition of Hands, do reſtore " the Sick, and heal all Diſeaſes: And, as we have alrea- " dy ſaid, the Dead are raiſed, and do ſurvive with us, " many Years. But, What ſhall I ſay? for 'tis not poſ- " ſible to reckon up the number of thoſe Gifts, which the " Church all the World over has receiv'd, and does exert " even every Day, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, crucify'd " under *Pontius Pilate*, neither ſeducing any One, or taking " from him any Mony; for he that has receiv'd it freely " from God, does miniſter the Gift *gratis* unto others: " Moreover, they *now ſpeak* in all Tongues *by the Spirit of* " *God*, even as St. *Paul* ſpake; even as we ourſelves have " heard many of the Brethren, that have the Prophetical " Gifts in the Church, and who ſpeak by the Spirit in all " Languages, and profitably *do make manifeſt the Secrets of* " *Mens Hearts*, and openly publiſh the myſterious Things " of God.

§ 14. Says Mr. *Dodwell*, in his *Diſſertations* on this Paſ- ſage, " I ſee not what could be ſpoken more magnificent, " of even the Apoſtolick Age, in the very Scriptures Apo- " ſtolical; I ſee no one Gift in the Church then, more " than *Irenæus* here mentions of his Age: Did the Church- " es Apoſtolick enjoy the Gift of Healing, give Hearing " to the Deaf, Sight to the Blind, and Cure all Maims " and Diſeaſes? So did thoſe coeval with our Author; " and even with the ſame Sign of the Impoſition of Hands, " with the ſame Faſting and Prayers, and calling over " them the ſacred Name of Jeſus; the Dead were raiſed " in the Apoſtolick Churches, and yet we have but rare " Mention of it, in the *Acts of Apoſtles*; and here we find " that among the Brethren, it was frequently ſo, upon the " general Supplication of a Church, and upon neceſſary " Urgency; and the Dead ſo raiſed lived amongſt them " many Years; (but not to recite all Mr. *Dodwell*'s Com- " ment) Here is Evidence, ſays he, of Viſions, and Fore- " knowledge of future Things, and *Prophetical Speeches,* " *and manifeſting the Thoughts of Mens Hearts, and of open-* " *ing the deep Things of God*: And theſe Gifts were in that " Plenty, that they could not be numbred. Theſe Things

" are reported by *Irenæus*, not as Things of ſome Time " paſſed, or which he had upon Truſt, or uncertain Ru- " mor; but they were performed daily, to the Benefit of " the Nations, and he himſelf both ſaw and heard them, " and receiv'd the Evidence of them by his own proper " Senſes, being Things done in the publick Aſſemblies of " the Church, and therefore capable to be atteſted by the " concurrent witneſſing of the Church univerſal; and if " theſe Affirmations had not been univerſally known to be " true, *Euſebius*, inſtead of inſerting this Paſſage in his Hi- " ſtory to the Honour of *Iræneus*, would either have left it " out, or reproved him for it *(having a very fair Opportunity* " *to do ſo, becauſe* Iræneus *was a Chiliaſt, or held the future Reign* " *of the Meſſiah, which* Euſebius *oppoſed)* but theſe are not " the ſole Paſſages in this antient Father, which affirm " the Continuance of the *Paracleet*, in the Church; for " ſays he elſewhere, *Where a Church is, there the Spirit of* " *God is, and where the Spirit of God is, there is a Church,* " *and every Gift* (of his;) ſo that he aſſerts, that all man- " ner of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, were ſo " neceſſary to the connecting together the Conſtituents of " a Church, as if no Number of Men, however elſe com- " pacted together, was properly ſuch, if it were deſtitute " of thoſe Gifts; which Way of Argument in him, could " never have been tolerable, but upon the Foot of the " inconteſtible Certainty of the Facts precedently ad- " vanc'd; that is, that the Exiſtence of thoſe Gifts in " every Church, was apparently evident to a Demonſtra- " tion."

CHAP. IV.

Of PROPHECY *uncontroverted, in the* THIRD CENTURY.

§ 1. WE have, during the whole Series of the *Second Century*, found a Cloud of Witneſſes ſtill ſurviving to us in their Writings, that give ſuch Teſtimonies of the Spirit of Chriſt extraordinarily continuing in the Church, by all the Ways of Divine Manifeſtations Prophetick, as leave no Colour, for the common Allegation, that Prophe-

cy ceaſed with the writing of St. *John*'s *Revelation*, or at leaſt with the Age wherein he dy'd, *viz.* the End of the firſt Century; altho' we cannot, but ſecretly bluſh, on the reading of theſe Things, in Behalf of thoſe who ſtand in the Place of the Learned, and yet will ſhameleſly affirm the contrary to them. Surely, theſe Men will not perſiſt in that Courſe; but be that as it will, we ſhall not now repeat any thing that has been ſaid, in the Proofs above-enumerated, only that at the cloſe of them, we find the Continuance of the Gifts extraordinary of the Spirit, were ſo univerſal, that the very Definition of a Church, as conſtituted by Chriſt, was held neceſſarily to imply and require the Exiſtence of them, more or leſs, in every ſuch Church, diſtinctly: And this Conſtitution of Things being aſſerted by ſo eminent a Father as *Irenæus*, unreproved for it by others his Contemporaries, at the End of the Second Century; tho' it be a ſtrong Affirmation, to aſſure us poſitively of the Continuance more or leſs, of thoſe Gifts in every Church; yet it is far ſhort of what ſome modern Writers would have to be thought, that is, that every ſingle Teacher was inſpir'd, or gifted extraordinarily by the Holy Spirit, and that no one in thoſe Times was accounted a Miniſter, without it, or could be ſo. Nay, the very large poſitive Teſtimony of *Irenæus*, had been highly derogating from the Honour of his Saviour, by diminiſhing vaſtly the Riches of his Glory, in the Church (which is his Body and Fulneſs) had the Scheme of theſe Men been then true; and therefore I look upon it, a full Negative at that Time, to their Concluſion.

§ 2. But now, before I give my poor Endeavours, to proceed in the Collection of other like Teſtimonies of this great Subject, for the Duration of the Third Century; it is neceſſary to premiſe a Repitition of my own Ignorance in the Hiſtories of the Church of the firſt Ages; leſt the Reader ſhould conceive, that this mighty Demonſtration of the Triumph of Chriſt, when he led captive the Enſlaver of Souls, and gave Gifts unto rebellious Man, from on high) were in thoſe Ages limited to my deficient Quotations from ſome very few Authorities; let him therefore conſider, that theſe foregoing and ſubſequent Evidences of the *Teſtimony of Jeſus*, the *Spirit of Prophecy*, are here drawn out by one, who neither had ever any Academick Education, nor has the Benefit of Libraries; no, nor Leiſure, or indeed Natural Abilities, ſuch as Multitudes alive now have:

have: Wherefore, he may to his Comfort, and all the World that love the Lord Jesus in Sincerity, may to theirs, reasonably and justly expect, that not only one, but many abler Pens, will contribute more amply to set forth the abounding Subject of the everlasting Praises of our Redeemer's Magnificence, and exuberant Bounty of his Majestick Royalty, to his Beloved. But until those more auspicious and truly noble Undertakings (which may be a little answerable to the Dignity of the Matters, herein contained) do rejoice the Hearts of such, who wish all Glory to Christ, without any Partnership in it, unto Men; I shall here-under add, what occurs from my little, and very accidental reading.

§ 3. The *Testimony of Jesus* abiding with his Church, universally, unto the Year 200, being so largely evinced from *Irenæus*; it cannot be amiss to exhibit some Notes here, of what Mr. *Dodwell* in his *Dissertations* on that Father gives us, of the Prophetick State of the Church, not limited to the Second, but equally applicable to the Third Century: And tho' he cites not his Authorities for some Assertions positive therein, as we have done, and shall do, for the clear History of Facts; yet he having in his Preface declared, that in that Treatise, he gave not all, no nor the principal Remarks he could have done; the Author hereof, being well assured of Mr. *Dodwell*'s Declaration about Four Years agone, that the Account he had given in this Treatise, of the Prophetick Gifts in the primitive Times, was not only true in Fact, but that he was able to have added a great deal more touching them, and had yet the Notes prepared by him, to do so, if Occasion requir'd. Upon these Grounds, we do suppose, that what we have now to add, from his (at present) bare Assertion, was by him provable, and may be so by others, from authentick Monuments of Antiquity, still existent, tho' we for our Part, are not capable to do it. Until therefore, some abler Hand shall pursue this Argument, we must leave the ensuing Notes upon the Authority of him that gave them; and whose accurate Search into the Christian primary Ages, no one that enquires touching him, can be ignorant of; any more than he can find Reason to think, that Mr. *Dodwell* designed in this Work of his and others, to encourage a wild and foolish Enthusiasm. But let every Man judge as he pleases upon that Report of his; I sub-

join it here, with ſome Reflections, as he gives Occaſion, in the Preface to, and *Second Diſſertation* upon *Irenæus.*

§ 4. "The modern Ages (ſays he, in the Preface,) inter-
"pret Scripture, meerly by human Means and Abilities,
"but the Primitive had God and the Holy Spirit, in an
"extraordinary Manner, *the Interpreter of it.* Revelation
"indeed may be expounded both Ways, that is, either by
"human Wit, or by a new Revelation of the ſame Spi-
"rit, that firſt indited it. Thus *Daniel*, who had the
"Endowment of excellent Parts, might upon the Foot of
"his own Ability, have given the Senſe of a previous
"Revelation, before he did implore a new and other Re-
"velation, for the Expoſition of a former one: However,
"touching theſe two Ways of *Interpretation* of Scripture,
"no Man can doubt, but even the loweſt Degree of true
"Prophecy, ought to be preferr'd before the moſt polite
"and exquiſite Reaſonings of Men, upon it; and of Con-
"ſequence, for the right apprehending the Senſe of any
"Scripture, no one can doubt, to which of them we are
"to give the moſt Adherence and Faith: For Inſtance, in
"the Argument of the *Socinian* Controverſy, now-a-days,
"it is far leſs abſurd to think, that the moſt preſuming
"Arrogance of human Wit, may deceive them, than that
"the Divine Spirit, even in the loweſt Degree of Revela-
"tion can: Now, ſays he, we have the Teſtimony more
"than human, in the Church of the firſt Ages, on this
"Point, whereon we ought to depend, for the Interpreta-
"tion of Scripture, more than on the fineſt modern Rea-
"ſonings of Men." Unto which Obſervation of Mr. *Dod-well*, becauſe it belongs to the preſent Subject of proving acknowledg'd Prophecy in the Church, for the three firſt Centuries, I here ſubjoin the Aſſertion of *Epiphanius*, touching the ſame Point of Doctrine, or at leaſt that of the *Arian*; *Epiphanius* living about *Anno* 400. and treating of *Arius*, *Lib.* ii. *Tom.* 2. *p.* 728. and 735. ſays, "that the
"*Councils* which condemn'd him, did confirm the Faith deli-
"ver'd by the Apoſtles and Prophets to the Chriſtian Church.
"In the *Second Diſſertation*, Mr. *Dodwell* ſays, the Infallibili-
"ty aſcribed to the Apoſtles by the Church, we muſt not
"take to be proper only to their Writings, which we have,
"but to be the ſame in other Writings of theirs, and in their
"Actions and Speeches: The Infallibility of their Per-
"ſons, is evinced from their extraordinary Gifts, which
"ſhew they were endowed with the Prophetick Spirit:

"That

" That, That Spirit was from God, and accordingly good, " the *Jews* were wont to infer, from *the Signs of Prophets*, " and therefore to prove it the ſame Way to the *Jews*, the " Apoſtles accommodated themſelves to their Conceptions, by inſiſting on *the ſame Appearances of the Spirit, the* " *ſame Signs of Prophets*: But as to the Infallibility affixed " to their Perſons, there never was a Prophet (except our " Lord Himſelf) who did all Things under the Guidance " of the Prophetick Spirit; and in thoſe which he the " Prophet performed by his human Spirit, he was obnoxious to human Errors. Thus *Barnabas* and *Peter*, tho' " endued with the higheſt Degree of the extraordinary " Gifts, did err. Therefore any Error in leſſer Matters, " found upon the Prophetical Fathers of the Second Century, does not conclude againſt their being veſted with " the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and in Conſequence their being infallible in Points of great Moment; " for Error in ſuch Points, muſt have been pernicious, " and highly injurious to the Church, for whoſe Sake Revelations were given: Therefore Errors of this kind, I " take to be inconſiſtent, with the true Claim of Prophetick Inſpiration, tho' thoſe of a leſs, do not appear to me " ſo." Now becauſe Men have generally admitted a Notion, that any Error of what kind ſoever, tho' of very ſmall moment, is utterly inconſiſtent with true Inſpiration, differently from what Mr. *Dodwell* thus repreſents of the Prophetick Times; and on other Occaſions, ſeveral of the Learned do aſſert; I refer to their Conſideration, the mention of *Jeremiah* in *Matth.* xxvii. 9. whereas that Paſſage is found in *Zechariah*, and not in *Jeremiah*. Let them alſo reflect on that in *Mark* ii. 26. how *David* is there ſaid to eat the Shew-bread in the Days of *Abiathar* the High-Prieſt, when by 1 *Sam.* xxi. in the whole Context of the Story, it appears, that *Abimilech* was then Prieſt. So likewiſe in *Acts* vii. 16. *Abraham* is nam'd to have bought the Sepulchre at *Sichem*, whereas 'tis plain, from *Gen.* xxxiii. 18, 19. that the ſame was bought by *Jacob*. In like manner, What ſhall we ſay to that of 1 *Cor.* xv. 5. where *Twelve* Apoſtles are mention'd to have ſeen our Lord riſen, when certainly there was not that number: Moreover, if we conſider the Words written upon our Saviour's Croſs, and that they are given us to be different, by every one of the four Goſpels; we muſt on theſe Accounts, (as well as that in 1 *Cor* xiv. 29. where ſome actuated by the divine Spi-

rit, are ſuppoſed capable of erring) conclude, that the Modern Dogmaes or Syſtems touching the Spirit of Prophecy, are unſcriptural; becauſe theſe little Defects are by Supreme Wiſdom, not in vain left in the Sacred Text.

§ 6. But to purſue the Recital of Mr. *Dodwell*'s Report concerning thoſe Times, "Theſe Gifts (ſays he) of the Spirit "Extraordinary, were diſtributed not only in the Second, "but alſo in the Third Century, even unto the Time of "*Conſtantine*; and thus it was, that God Himſelf immediately, and not Men, did take Care of his Church, and the "Evidence of his divine Favour to Her, was that degree "of the Gifts; far be it from us to underſtand, That the "Human Spirit did preſide or preſcribe to the Divine; "for the Gifts Extraordinary, were for the publick Uſe "and Guidance of the Church; therefore, if God ſet "ſome Men in it, to Preſide and Guide others, He ſo conſtituted Things, that Men might know, they followed and were led by his own Divine Direction, rather than the Dictate of Man. And thus we read often that *The Spirit fell* (*inſiliit*, leaped) *upon them*, when "they received from God a Publick Truſt, as it was with "the Elders that partook of it with *Moſes*, for his help in "Government; neither let us think, that this Unction "of the Spirit, was an induction ſo Temporary, that the "like may not be expected again in our Days; for the "Chriſtians of Primitive Times did ſo underſtand it, that "the Holy Anointing mention'd by the Apoſtle *John* more "than once, did mean the internal Oyl (the Spirit given) "reſponding to the outward Call.

§ 7. In the ſame Second *Diſſertation* on *Irenæus*, Mr. *Dodwell* continues his Remarks, on the Prophetical State of Chriſtians, ſaying, "In the firſt Converſion of Churches, "the Water of Baptiſm was a Symbol of the Spirit extraordinary, for the Spirit was in that manner (for the "moſt part) conferr'd on the Baptized, that *it appear'd "and ſhew'd itſelf, by ſome outward and ſenſible ſign*, which "they called the *Manifeſtation* of the Spirit; and this was "ſo apparently exhibited, that the very Infidels could not "doubt, of that Gift of the Spirit: Thus the Gift of it to "ſome, who were Baptized, being *open to, and affecting "the Senſes of others*, drew many new Proſelytes daily, "unto Baptiſm; which Argument to perſuade Converts, "could have been of no validity, but that the Gift of the

"Spirit

" Spirit therein, did *diſcover itſelf obviouſly, by ſome Sign*
" *affecting the Senſes of all Beholders*; unto which *Manife-*
" *ſtation* of the Spirit, the Apoſtle refers, 1 *Cor.* xii. 7.
" and thoſe who were thus *poſſeſſed* by the Spirit, were
" ſuch, who in the Apprehenſion of the *Greeks*, ought to be
" ſtiled *Prophets*, inſomuch that the *Gentiles* themſelves
" were ſatisfied, that thoſe very Perſons were Prophets,
" and had truly receiv'd the Spirit. Thus the Words of
" our Saviour were made good, *Ye ſhall be baptized* (plun-
" ged or cover'd) *with the Holy Spirit*, as *John* baptized
" with Water, without it; (which Emblem of covering,
" anſwers to that of the Old Teſtament, of *clothed by the*
" *Spirit.)* That Spirit which was on the Prophets, under
" the Times of the Law, was the very ſame, which
" Chriſt conferr'd under the Goſpel; and which the antient
" Prophets had predicted ſhould be communicated to all,
" in the laſt Times of Chriſtianity, as *Joel* annexes, *and they*
" *ſhall propheſy*, to the Words, *I will pour out my Spirit up-*
" *on all Fleſh*; and of this *prophetical Teaching by the Spirit*,
" are to be underſtood the Words of *Iſaiah* liv. 13. *All thy*
" *Children ſhall be taught of God*, as it ſtands diſtinguiſhed
" from, *No Man ſhall any more teach his Brother, or his*
" *Neighbour, ſaying, Know the Lord.* Jer. xxxi. 34. *but all*
" *Men ſhould know Him*, without needing any human Inſtru-
" ctions, or Teaching.

§ 8. " Nevertheleſs, altho' we owe Faith to God revealing
" in all; nor is one Word of God's to be preferr'd before
" another, yet the Caſe, as to thoſe who are inſpir'd of
" God, is not the ſame; for among theſe, ſome have more
" ample Gifts than others; and in Conſequence, more aſ-
" ſuring Arguments, why we ſhould prefer them in be-
" lieving: Nor do we thereby deny our Faith to God re-
" vealing, when for the diſcriminating (to our Satisfaction)
" the human Spirit from the divine, we deſiſt from a Pro-
" phet of a leſs Rank, to build upon another, in an high-
" er; for the Apoſtle ſuppoſes ſuch Degrees among the
" Prophets, when he allows ſome to judge of what others
" had ſpoken, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 29. (ſome Defect being thereby
" imply'd;) they had alſo among them *certain Means*, by
" which aſſuredly to diſtinguiſh, between thoſe truly in-
" ſpir'd, and thoſe not ſo; one of which was, that none
" probably preſided in the Church, but who were remar-
" kable for Spiritual Gifts, and more eſpecially for that of
" diſcerning Spirits; And this we may the rather believe,

" be-

" becauſe by the concurring Monuments of thoſe Times,
" it appears, that the extraordinary Gifts were uſed, in the
" electing of Men for the Miniſtry. Unto this, did the
" Preſcriptions of St. *Paul* refer, *Deſpiſe not Prepheeyings*;
" *Prove all Things, hold faſt what is good*; and that of
" St. *John, Try the Spirits, whether they be of God*: And the
" Trial was not of the Gifts by thoſe without them, but
" the Judgment was to be made by the extraordinary
" Gifts themſelves (in others.) In particular, with reſpect
" to the Call of Miniſters, it was committed to the Diſ-
" cerner of the Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart;
" and the Spiritual Man judged *all Things*, and he himſelf
" was (in that Judgment) diſcerned of no Man; for we
" find, in the Old and New Teſtament both the Spirit
" of Judgment or Knowledge mention'd among the Spi-
" ritual Gifts: In this Matter then the Spirit ſignified
" his Will, after divers Manners, and ſometimes made
" known to the Prophets, the future Conduct and Diſpoſi-
" tions, and Gifts of him, who was to be ordained a Mini-
" ſter, as 1 *Tim.* i. 18. and the Holy Spirit guided and di-
" rected alſo external Things relating to the Church not
" only by Revelations made thereof to the Paſtors, but to
" other Members of it alſo, even to ſome of *the moſt ab-*
" *ject and contemptible among the Laity*: For Illuſtration
" therefore, when the Names of Men to be ordain'd
" for Paſtors were, after an Examination, propoſed to
" the Church, and ſolemn Faſting and Prayers were on
" that Occaſion uſed; then the Prophets, their Sentence
" appear'd in it, not that of any certain or prepar'd Per-
" ſons, but according to the free Pleaſure of the Prophe-
" tick Spirit, ſometimes by the *Mouth of Children*, ſome-
" times of grown Perſons, ſometimes of Miniſters, ſome-
" times of the Laicks, even juſt, as at that Time, the (*Im-*
" *petus*) *ruſhing Power of the Spirit of Prophecy impelled them*;
" for it was the Way of God, not always to inſtruct the very
" Apoſtles by their own proper Revelations, but often by
" thoſe of other People; and no Man was admitted into
" the publick Offices of the Church, but who was ap-
" prov'd by the publick Teſtimonies of it. Thus, that in
" 1 *Cor.* xii. 22. the leſs comely Parts of the Body myſti-
" cal, became more neceſſary, ſo that the Eye, even thoſe
" who had ordinarily the Gift of Knowledge, could not
" ſay to the Hand or Feet, we have no Need of ye. And
" thus probably, it was diſpoſed by the Framer of the

" Body,

" Body, leſt Miniſters ſhould be puffed up with their " peculiar Gifts, or learn to deſpiſe thoſe of the Laity.

§ 9. " During the Second and Third Century, as well " as in the Firſt, all Sorts of Men, and even of Women, " of every Rank, had the extraordinary Gifts of the Pro- " phetick Spirit, tho' thoſe who were moſt remarkable for " the Degree of it, were placed in the higheſt Stations, in " the Church; and 'tis certain, there were no Offices per- " formed in the Church, but what were primarily to be re- " ferr'd, to *the Gift of Prophecy* in it: In particular, the ſing- " ing of Pſalms, which made up by far, the largeſt Part of " publick Worſhip, was almoſt peculiar to the Prophets, " for they had the Gift not only to compoſe Pſalms, but to " ſing them; for the antient *Gentiles* eſteem'd Poets to be " ſacred and called them, Divine Speakers; and thus *Epi-* " *menides* the Poet is call'd by St. *Paul*, a Prophet, *Tit.* i. " 12. In a parallel Alluſion, the ſacred Enthuſiaſm of the " Prophets, in a Poetical *Rapture of the Divine Spirit* among " Chriſtians, took Place in the Tone of Singing, as well " as in the compoſing of Hymns; the Holy Spirit raiſed " the Affections, and Imagination of thoſe that ſung, and " diſpoſed them interchangeably, to be excited to the ut- " moſt impelling Exertions of the ſame Spirit in others; as " we find the Uſe of Muſick among the Prophets, in the " Time of *Eliſha*, to prepare Men for the *Illapſes of the* " *Spirit*: Nor do I think, that the Word *Euchariſt*, " (Thankſgiving) uſed for the Sacrament, had any other " Original, but from the Conjunction of a Hymn with it; " which was dictated or ſung, not by any ſtated Miniſter, " in that extraordinary Diſcipline in the Church, but by " whomſoever among the Croud of the Faithful, *the Pro-* " *phetical impelling Power fell upon*; and the ſame Perſon " under that impetuous Power, was then alſo *driven*, to " conſecrate the Sacrament; nor poſſibly had the Sacra- " mental Elements in thoſe Times, any other Conſecrati- " on than that Euchariſtical Hymn. Next to the Pſalms, " the chief Act of Worſhip was Preaching, which was by " the Language and Cuſtom of thoſe Ages, termed παρα- " κλησεις, which may be underſtood, either *Conſolations or* " *Exhortations*; and this *Preaching* (by the *Paracleet*) was " properly the Office of the Prophets; among whom, he " that had the Gift of Knowledge, was in a Specifick Man- " ner, termed a *Teacher, or Doctor.*

§ 18. " Dr.

§ 10. " Dr. *Whitby*'s Preface to his Paraphraſe on all the " Epiſtles of the New Teſtament, tells us, that we have " Reaſon to believe the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, " were conferr'd upon other Churches, equally with thoſe " which the Apoſtles mention in their Epiſtles. For this " appears included in divers Expreſſions touching Prophets " and Prophecy uſed therein (cited there, by the Author;) " and it may be gather'd alſo for the Reaſon of the Thing; " for the Operations of the Holy Spirit are ſaid to be de- " ſigned for theſe ſeveral Ends. *Firſt*, The Confirmation of " the Teſtimony and the Faith of Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* i. 6. And " their Eſtabliſhment in Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* i. 21, 22. *Secondly*, " The Edification of the Body of Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* xii. 7. *Eph.* " iv. 11, 12. *Thirdly*, To be a Pledge and Earneſt of their " Adoption, and their future Happineſs, *Rom.* viii. 23. " 2 *Cor.* i. 22. *Gal.* iv. 6, 7. *Eph.* i. 13. *Fourthly*, To be " their Comfort under Perſecutions, *Rom.* v. 3, 5. 2 *Cor.* i. " 7. 1 *Pet.* i. 4. Now theſe are Ends, as neceſſary for all, " as for any Chriſtian Churches, who muſt all equally " need the Confirmation of their Faith, the Work of the " Miniſtry, the perfecting of the Saints, and the Edifica- " tion of the Body of Chriſt, the Support and Comfort " of the Spirit under Perſecutions, the Pledge and Ear- " neſt of their future Hopes.

§ 11. It ſeems evident, that at the firſt Foundation of " a Chriſtian Church, among the *Gentiles*, there were no " ſettled Paſtors to perform the publick Offices, in their " Aſſemblies; but they were generally performed by Pro- " phets, or *Spiritual Men*, who had *the Gift of Prophecy*, or " were in the Aſſembly *excited* to that Work, by an *Af-* " *flatus* of the Holy Spirit. For the Apoſtles did not pre- " ſently upon the Converſion of any Number of Perſons " to the Chriſtian Faith, ordain them Elders in every " Church, but left them for a Seaſon to the Conduct of " thoſe Prophets, and ſpiritual Men, the Holy Ghoſt had " fitted for that Work. The Church of *Antioch* was con- " verted, ſaith Dr. *Lightfoot*, in the Fortieth Year of our " Lord; and yet no Elders (ſtated Miniſters) were ordain- " ed among them till the Fiftieth Year; but in this In- " terval, there were Prophets among them, who miniſtred " in their Aſſemblies to the Lord. In like Manner, the Iſle " of *Crete* was converted for ſome conſiderable Time, and " ſo likewiſe miniſter'd unto, before St. *Paul* ſent *Titus* to

" them,

" them, *to ordain Elders in every City.* And if we may " take an Eſtimate of other Churches, by what was cer- " tainly performed in that of *Corinth*, we cannot reaſona- " bly doubt the Truth of this Aſſertion; for, whereas all " the Publick Offices performed then in the Church, were " Prayer, and ſinging Pſalms, *expounding or Preaching the* " *Word*, and Euchariſtical Oblations. All theſe are in " 1 *Cor.* xiv. aſcribed to the Prophets in that Church, or " to the Men endued with ſpiritual Gifts among them. " Some of thoſe Prophets prayed; others compoſed ſacred " Hymns by their Spiritual Gift; others did *teach* for Edi- " fication, Exhortation and Comfort; others did alſo then " ευλογειν, *bleſs*, which is the Word uſed for Conſecration " of the *Euchariſt*, *Chap.* x. 16. And ευχαριστειν, *give* " *Thanks*, which is the Word uſed in our Lord's Inſtitu- " tion of this Sacrament, 1 *Cor.* xi. 21. But that all or any " of theſe Things were done by ſtated Paſtors, we never " read in the Epiſtles to that Church.

§ 12. " All which Things put together, render it more " than probable, that there were then, no ſettled Paſtors " in the Church of *Corinth*, which makes it neceſſary that " the Affairs of their Church Aſſemblies, ſhould be whol- " ly managed by their *Prophets* or *Spiritual Perſons.* It " ſeemeth alſo highly probable, that this was the Caſe " of other Churches, ſince the Apoſtle directing his Epi- " ſtles to many of them, makes no Mention of any " Church-Governors among them; either in the Begin- " ning of them, as he does in his Epiſtle to the *Philip-* " *pians*, or in the Salutations at the cloſe of them, as in " that to the *Hebrews.* Now, for *the Continuance of this* " *Gift of Prophecy*, not only in the Age of the Apoſtles, " but in ſeveral ſucceeding ones, we have ſufficient Evi- " dence from the beſt Writers of the Chriſtian Church, " as *Hermas*, *Polycarp*, *Ignatius*, *Quadratus*, *Juſtin Martyr*, " *Irenæus*, *Origen*, the Oppoſers of *Montanus*, and from o- " thers. There was alſo another divine Gift, which bear- " eth ſome Affinity to that of Prophecy, *viz.* that of diſ- " cerning Spirits, which diſcover'd it ſelf, not only in diſ- " cerning between true and falſe Prophets, and in expo- " ſing the Secrets of Men's Hearts; but alſo was exerci- " ſed, in diſcerning Mens's Fitneſs or Qualifications for " any Office in the Church, and accordingly in *ſetting them* " *apart for that Office.* Here then we find by all theſe " early Teſtimonies, that in the two firſt Centuries many

" Gifts

" Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, were ſtill continued in all " Churches. Theſe alſo are Relations, not of Things " done in a Corner, but commonly performed in the Face " of the Aſſemblies, and ſo confirmed by the joint Te- " ſtimonies of all Chriſtian Churches. None but our " Jeſus, ſaith *Origen*, ever pretended to enable their Fol- " lowers, to ſpeak with Tongues, *to diſcover the Secrets of* " *Mens Hearts*, or confer all, or any of theſe Gifts, upon " their Proſelytes. But ſaith *Irenæus* in his *Tract of* " *Weights*, there are unhappy Men, who chooſe them- " ſelves to be falſe Prophets, that is, to ſpeak in God's " Name, when they confeſs they are not taught of God, " and *who endeavour to repell the Grace of Prophecy from the* " *Church.*" But to return again to Mr. *Dodwell*'s Report.

§ 13. " After the Year 220. and from thence unto 250, " ſays Mr. *Dodwell*, the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, " did decreaſe and grow rare, in Compariſon of the " Time preceding; for in that Space, *Theophilus* who " wrote in Defence of Chriſtianity, ſeems to confeſs, he " could not find one Inſtance of a Perſon, who had been " raiſed from the Dead: In this Space, the *uſual Manif-* " *ſtation or viſible Sign of the Spirit falling on the Baptiz'd*, " ſeems to have ceaſed; as likewiſe the Gifts of Langua- " ges grew deficient; and in the ſame Interval, the Gift " of publickly diſcovering Men's Thoughts, was alſo " wanting; or at leaſt, we find but few if any of theſe " ſeveral Gifts, mention'd by any Writers of good Credit, " later than this Period; and at the latter End of this " Period, *Origen* acquaints us, that tho' in his Age, *the* " *Gift of Propheſying* ſtill remained, yet it was decreaſed, " and not in the ſame Meaſure, as in the foregoing Age; " and ſince this Decay hapned with Reſpect to *the Gift of* " *Prophecy* we need not to wonder, that the like befel other " Gifts; ſeeing the Apoſtle puts this Diſcrimination, be- " tween that of Prophecy and the other Gifts, that theſe were " given for the ſake of Infidels, as a Sign to them, where- " as God graciouſly beſtowed that of Prophecy, chiefly to " the end, that the Church Herſelf might be Edified by " it, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 3, 4, 22. Wherefore the Chriſtians of the " Primitive Ages, did expect that ſome Degree of Pro- " phecy would be perpetual in the Church; and not with- " ſtanding what is here noted of the Deficience of ſome, " and Decay of other Gifts, there ſubſiſted after this " Period, ſome or other of the Miraculous Gifts, which " reſti-

teſtified the extraordinary Preſence of Chriſt with his Church; but whereas, in the Times we are now ſpeaking of, there was very ſeldom or ſcarce any, expreſs Miſſions undertaken by the Chriſtians to Convert Infidels, there was not the like reaſon to expect, the ſame plenty of the Miraculous Gifts, as did attend the Converting of Heathen Nations; but if occaſion offer'd it ſelf, to ſolicit Infidels to the Faith, there remained ſtill Indications ſufficiently manifeſt of the Divine Preſence in the Church, as in particular the Power of caſting out Devils, and the Gift of Healing adminiſtred to Unbelievers: Beſides, there were ſome Things extraordinarily granted to the joynt Prayers of the Church, when Her Children were Driven, by ſome heavy Neceſſities or Streights, to ſupplicate the Divine Grace more intenſly; and thus the Hiſtories of thoſe Times acquaint us, ſome things happen'd to ſtrengthen the Minds of the Martyrs, who were to paſs through Agonies for the Faith; even after all theſe Signs of the Decay, of the extraordinary Gifts, thoſe however which were moſt uſeful to the Church, were of all other Gifts the moſt permanent. And thus among the Ancients, the moſt recent and longeſt mention, we find of any of thoſe Gifts, is of *Propheſyings*, which were to the Edification or Benefit of the Church, either by Edifying the Faithful, or by directing in Her Publick Affairs, or by deciding touching the *Candidates* for Baptiſm, or thoſe *for the Stated Miniſtry*: And for this very End, that the Church might profit Herſelf, of the extraordinary Preſence of God with Her, the Prophets were forced into the Publick Aſſemblies, that they might ſeverally declare the Revelations of God, and communicate them for the Publick Uſes; and their *Propheſyings* uſed to be commonly *delivered with Signs*, (*Simbolis*,) for in the caſe of Prophecy, beſides Symbolical Words, the *Symbolical Facts were received alſo*."

§ 14. Having given from the Notes of this learned Antiquary and others, ſome Account of the State, Uſes, and Manner of Propheſying in the Church, applicable either to that in the Second or in the Third Century indifferently, we now purſue the Hiſtory of Fact; and that the Spirit of Prophecy reſted among Chriſtians after the Year 200. will appear by what *Euſeb. Lib.* v. *Cap.* 10. tells us of "one *Pantænus*, a Stoick Philoſopher, converted to Chriſt; "who was touched with vehement Ardor of Mind, in re-

"lation

" lation to the Divine Word, and was ſent (of God) to " preach the Goſpel to the Nations of the *Eaſt*, as far as " *India*; for there were even unto that Time, *many Evan-* " *geliſts of the Word*, who were incited by a divine Zeal, " like unto that of the Apoſtles, to give themſelves up to the " Propagation and ſpreading of the *Divine Word*: Among " theſe *Pantænus*, after he had accompliſh'd his Miſſion into " *India*, returned to *Alexandria*, and there partly by Writing, " and partly by Word of Mouth, he held forth the Treaſures " of Divine Principles. Unto this *Pantænus*, *Clemens of Alex-* " *andria* was a Scholar, who in his Book call'd *Stromaton*, " recorded the Portraiture of thoſe bleſſed Men here men- " tion'd, worthy of immortal Memory, for their *efficaci-* " *ous (inſpir'd) and invigorated Speakings*; one of whom " ſays he) was an *Ionian*; another of *Great Greece*; ano- " ther was born in *Cæloſyria*; another came from *Ægypt*; " ſome of them lived in the *Eaſt*, of whom one was an " *Aſſyrian*; another of *Paleſtine*, by Birth a *Jew*; but the " laſt in Order, was the firſt of all in *Heavenly Power*, " whom I found out, lying hid in *Ægypt*: This was a " Child, who had receiv'd from the Father, and the reſt " had kept faſt the Tradition of the bleſſed Doctrine of " the Apoſtles *Peter*, *James*, *John* and *Paul*; few are the " Children like their Fathers, but theſe had from God " preſerv'd unto our Days, thoſe antient and Apoſtolical " Seeds."

§ 15. This Teſtimony of the Prophetick Spirit ſubſiſting, given by *Euſebius* out of a Book of *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, exhibits Inſtances thereof continuing unto the Year 220. and concerning the ſame Time, Mr. *Dodwell's Diſſertation on St. Cyprian*, p. 15. 16. quotes an anonymous Author of the Martyrology of *Perpetua*, *Saturus* and *Felicitas* in *Africa*, who recites at large the Viſions of theſe Martyrs, written with their own Hands. Upon which Occaſion, that antient Author in the Preface to his Treatiſe, does prove and recommend the Uſefulneſs of ſuch Viſions, from the Prophecy of *Joel*, which had promiſed them, to be vouchſafed of God, in the latter Day; the ſaid Writer of the *Acts* of theſe Martyrs, confirms his Aſſertions by Scripture Teſtimonies, and alledges, " That the Perſons he treats of, were owned for Martyrs by the Church univerſally, and ſays, Thus we acknowledge and honour, as " well *new Viſions, as new Propheſyings*, which were of old " promiſed; and we eſteem the other Powers of the Ho-

" ly

" ly Spirit, to be to the Benefit of the Church: Where-
" fore, to the Glory of God, and of our Saviour, who ad-
" miniſters all the extraordinary Gifts freely, unto every
" one ſeverally as He pleaſes, we here cannot but celebrate
" the ſame, and recommend the reading thereof: And
" this we do the rather, leſt any one ſhould think, thro'
" Weakneſs, or Fainting in Faith, that ſuch condeſcending
" Graciouſneſs of God, in the Revelations of Himſelf,
" was vouchſafed only to the Antient, or earlier Chriſti-
" ans: But when God always performs and works what
" He has promiſed, thoſe that will not believe the *Pro-*
" *phetick Teſtimony*, let them at leaſt regard *the Benefit*."
Mr. *Dodwell* having thought fit to go no further, in the Recital of this antient Author, we can but ſuppoſe in this Caſe (what is apparent in many others) that the Tenour of his Argument in the Preface, was to ſhew, that the Revelations there alluded to, did excite and ſtrengthen the Martyrs, to ſeal the Faith of Chriſt with their Blood, which in Effect proved to the Benefit of the Church in general.

§ 16. During the ſame Space of Time, *Euſebius* (*lib.* v. *cap.* 28.) mentions one *Natalius* who deny'd the Divinity of Chriſt, and was abominable in Life; " This Man, ſays he,
" was often admoniſhed of the Lord in Dreams; for our
" moſt merciful God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt would not
" ſuffer him to periſh out of the Church; but *Natalius* led
" aſtray by filthy Lucre and Ambition, neglected to give
" heed to the Warnings, ſent him from above, by thoſe
" Viſions; ſo that at length he was ſcourged, and beaten
" grievouſly, for the Space of a whole Night, by the Ho-
" ly Angels; upon which he lamented his Crimes, being
" cover'd with Sackcloth and Aſhes, and publickly rolled
" himſelf at the Feet, both of the Miniſters and People,
" and with his Tears and Lamentations, beſought the
" Compaſſions of the Church, for the Bowels of Chriſt his
" Sake. After much of this kind of arguing, and when
" he had ſhewn on his Body, the Bruiſes and Wounds re-
" ceiv'd by the Stripes abovemention'd, he was at length
" admitted again into the Communion of the Church.
" All which was done in the City of *Rome* it ſelf, and
" was a Warning ſo pathetical to Sinners, that I ſuppoſe
" (ſays the Hiſtorian) had it been done in *Sodom*, they
" would have fallen to Repentance." But without any further Reflection on this Inſtance of Divine Revelation, we may juſtly determine, that a ſeverer Diſcipline by Men

could ſcarce be uſed to humble the Sinner, and that a more open and explicit Declaration of the publick Acknowledgment and Faith of the then Church, in ſuch like Divine Appearances, could ſcarce be poſſible.

§ 17. In the ſame Age, whilſt the Perſecution raged at *Alexandria*, *Euſebius* relates, " That there was among the " Martyrs a renowned young Woman named *Potamiana*, " whoſe Courage in Martyrdom, cauſed great Aſtoniſh- " ment among the Spectators. Three Days after her vi- " ctorious Entrance into Glory, *Potamiana* (that is, an An- " gel aſſuming her Form) appear'd by Night to one of " them named *Baſilides*, a *Roman* Soldier, and covering " his Head with a Crown, ſaid, he muſt ſhortly be taken " away: The Viſion wrought effectually to convert *Baſili-* " *des*. Many others alſo at the ſame Time in *Alexandria*, " were wrought upon to the open Confeſſion of their Faith " in Chriſt, by Viſions of *Potamiana*, who in Dreams ur- " ged them ſo to do: As to *Baſilides*, he became forthwith " ſo noble a Confeſſor, that he was ſoon diſtinguiſhed " with Chains, and in that Eſtate, whilſt the Chriſtian " Brethren careſſed him with the Right-Hand of Fellow- " ſhip, he was encircled with a Lawrel (of Martyrdom:)" Such as none of the *Cæſars*, ever had one to compare unto; being ſuch as the great Captain of our Salvation thought Himſelf to be glorify'd by. Thus are the weak Things of Chriſt ſtronger than the haughtieſt of Men, and the Things deſpiſed, hath He choſen, to put to Silence the moſt eſteem'd: For alas, what is all the Retorick and Oratory and Quaintneſs of Man's Wiſdom able to convert a Sinner, to enlighten an Idolater, and make a Martyr for the Faith, of a diſſolute Soldier? But the Power of Chriſt, in a Viſion, did all theſe in a Trice. And we need not be offended with the Manner of the Apparition, or wonder at the Chriſtian Hiſtorian's Celebration of theſe Things. if we conſider, that the Book of *Hermas* (then receiv'd for ſacred Scripture) tells us that an Angel which appear'd to him, in the Form of a Woman, was Chriſt; and ſurely an Angel might as well perſonate *Potamiana*, as we read in the *Acts*, that one did perſonate *Ananias*, *Chap.* ix. 12. and another was ſuppoſed to appear in the Perſon of *Peter*; and as we have herein heard before, *Polycarp* after his Death, and *Ignatius* alſo were ſeen.

§ 18. Ha-

§ 18. Having thus far in the Third Century, given an Account of particular Persons, who enjoyed an extraordinary Communion with God, by his Grace to them, in revealing Himself to them more especially; to make this Way of Proof, the more closely connected, we proceed to other Persons also, to whom in particular the Prophetick Spirit was conceded, by the Report of *Eusebius*, touching that Age; for says he, "*Anno* 241. there was an Election "to be made of a Bishop in *Rome*, and those concerned in "it were assembled to that Purpose, and *Fabianus* a "Country Minister was accidentally present, whom no bo-"dy had the least Thought about, as to the Election; "when suddenly from on high, there came down a Dove, "and allighted upon his Head, after the manner of the "Holy Spirit, which in like Form, descended upon our "Saviour; upon which, the whole Multitude present, as "moved by the same one Divine Spirit, readily, and with "one Soul cried out, *He was worthy, and instantly constitu-*"*ted him, their Bishop.*" Now, as we have already heard, that the Holy Spirit did by the Prophets, ordinarily call Men in the Christian Church, to the Work of the publick Ministry, the above-mention'd Vision and Divine Influence immediate on the People, was according to those Times, a clear and full Discovery of the Will of God by Revelation, for the Appointment of *Fabianus*, to be Bishop of *Rome*; but this Instance of the Regard publickly paid to every Act of God revealing, is backed by another very remarkable, in the Election of a Bishop also: "For *Narcis-*"*sus* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, being about an Hundred Years "old, and thereby unfitted for the Duties of his Function; "the marvellous Dispensation of God, provided for him a "Help, by signifying to *Alexander*, a *Cappadocian* Bishop, "through a Vision by Night, that he should go to *Jerusa-*"*lem*; and when *Alexander* approach'd near to that City, "several of the chief Persons of that Church, had Visi-"ons also, which appear'd to them by Night, when also "they heard a Voice, commanding them to hasten out of "the Gates of that City, and receive the Bishop, ordain'd "of God for them: Accordingly, they, with the Consent "of the Church, obey'd; and meeting *Alexander*, and "conducting him into *Jerusalem*, they constrain'd him to "abide with them, and exercise the Office of a Bishop, "(without other appointment, than what was given from

" Heaven;) he continu'd in that Function ſeveral Years, " and dy'd under Impriſonment for the Faith, *An.* 253." By theſe Particulars, and by many general Aſſertions fore-mention'd, in this Hiſtorical Deduction, of the Spirit extraordinarily abiding in the Church, it appears, that the Chriſtian Affairs of moment, were under the immediate Government of God, preſent in all Places for Her Director and Guide, in Matters of Importance. And how happy and comfortable that Theocracy was, which neceſſarily excluded all Intrigues, Avarice, Ambition, and Uſurpation of Man, I leave duly to be reflected on.

§ 19. Whilſt *Alexander* ſate Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, *Euſebius* tells us, " That *Demetrius*, Biſhop of *Alexandria*, had in " ſome Treatiſe or Letters, by him publiſh'd, declar'd, " That it was a Practice never heard of, that Men unor-" dain'd to the publick Miniſtry, ſhould in the preſence of " Biſhops or Paſtors, teach in the Church; but *Alexander* " of *Jeruſalem*, and *Theophylact* of *Cæſaria*, boldly anſwer'd " him, That the ſaid Aſſertion of his, was an audacious " Untruth; and for Confutation thereof, they produc'd " divers Inſtances, wherein Men without any Ordination, " had been requeſted, even by the Paſtors or Biſhops " publickly to preach in the Church." Now this Paſſage is worthy of Remark, becauſe it gives an Hint, of ſome human Uſurpations about this Time riſing in the Church, and alſo, becauſe that the Prophetical Paſtor *Alexander*, was an open Oppoſer of ſuch like Practices. And indeed the very admitting of, or ſubmitting to, the immediate Regency of Heaven, ſignified (as Mr. *Dodwell* expreſſes the Thing) by Children, Women, and the moſt abject of the People, on whom the Spirit fell, muſt needs be a ſevere Mortification to the Pride of Men; on the other Side therefore, according to the Courſe of human Paſſions, the Pride of Man may well be ſuppoſed to riſe up, againſt the Spirit of Prophecy, which ſtands oppoſed to, and reſiſteth the Proud. Thus it ſeems, the Prophets found ſome Reaſon to grow remiſs, in their thankleſs Office in publick; for the ſame Author acquaints us, they were ſometimes *forced* into the Aſſemblies; and *Clemens* of *Alexandria* from his Obſervation, tells us, the moſt eminent Perſon for Spiritual Gifts that he knew, lay hid in *Ægypt*, ſo that he had much to do to find him out. *Irenæus* alſo takes Notice, that ſome Men objected to the *fantaſtick* Manner of the Prophets, altho' no otherwiſe fantaſtical, in Times of Chri-

Chriſtianity, than in thoſe, to whoſe Teſtimony our Saviour Himſelf appeal'd; he tells us alſo, of ſome that repell'd the Grace of Prophecy in the Church. There are many other Symptoms herein before-mention'd, of a growing Contempt of God revealing, and we ſhall ſee much to the ſame Purpoſe, more clearly by-and-by; but if the Prophet's Miniſtry in the Church became uneaſy, we have the leſs reaſon to wonder, that the Preaching of a Perſon uninſpir'd, ſhould be reſtrain'd unduly.

§ 20. But we have a better Account of *Dionyſius*, another Biſhop of *Alexandria*, as given by himſelf, and reported by the Hiſtorian *Euſebius*, *lib.* vii. *cap.* 7. as followeth; "Whilſt, ſays he, I had read ſome erroneous Authors, "and was in Debate within my ſelf, whither I ſhould go "on to do ſo, there came to me a Viſion from God, and "did confirm me; for therein I heard a Voice, diſtinctly "ſaying, *Read whatſoever cometh into thy Hands, for thou "ſhalt be able to weigh, prove, and try all, and by this Means "thou wert at firſt drawn in, to the Faith of Chriſt.* I thankfully entertained this Viſion, as agreeable to the Apoſtolical Voice, ſpoken to Men, of more Strength than me. "The ſame *Dyoniſius* mentions touching *Heraclas*, his Predeceſſor in the Church of *Alexandria*, that ſome Perſons "under Baptiſm had receiv'd the Holy Spirit, by his, the "ſaid Predeceſſor's Means. And again, ſpeaking of *Novatus* the Heretick, who renounced his Baptiſm, and had "drawn divers of the Brethren to Impieties, he adds, "*Novatus* cauſeth *the Holy Spirit to fly out of them*, tho' "there continue ſtill ſome Hope, that He will yet, either "remain with, or come upon them again." In which Paſſages, the Holy Spirit, as I conceive, cannot properly be underſtood in any other Senſe, than that of the Spirit of Prophecy: Wherefore, we have herein, an Atteſtation to it, from a Perſon of great Eminence in the Church, in reſpect to the Place whereof he was Biſhop; and the Time of this Teſtimony, we may refer to that of his Death, *Anno Domini*, 268.

§ 21. *Euſebius*, *lib.* vi. *cap.* 40. adds, "that *Dyoniſius* having in the Heat of Perſecution fled from his Houſe, he "himſelf gives an Account thereof, ſaying, an Officer of "the Emperor's ſought for me, four Days ſucceſſively, but "a Darkneſs fell upon his Eyes, that he could not find "the Houſe; mean Time I was commanded of God, to

" depart thence, and beyond all Expectation he open'd " me a Way for it; I ſpeak this in the Preſence of God, " who knows I do not therein lie, and that I fled not of " my own Will, but by his Appointment." (Now, ſays Mr. *Dodwell*, what ſhall we do in this Caſe? Shall we believe or not, this holy Man, upon his ſolemn Word, and Oath?) But as the ſame *Dyoniſius* tells us, " that the Per. " ſecution in *Alexandria*, was raiſed againſt the Chriſti. " ans, at the Inſtigation of the *Ægyptian* Sorcerers, be. " cauſe theſe were obſtruſted in their Enchantments, by " the miraculous Powers of Chriſt, *Euſeb. lib.* vii. 10. for, " ſays he, there are at this Day, as well as formerly, ſome " Perſons, who only by being preſent, and looking on, " or elſe by their *blowing and ſpeaking a Word*, do diſturb " all Enchantments of the Devil." Now becauſe the Circumſtance af blowing, apply'd to thoſe who had the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, may not poſſibly be readily apprehended, 'tis fit to have Recourſe to our firſt Principles touching the Oracles of God; the ſame Word therefore above rendred *blowing*, occurs in *John* xx. 22. where our Lord after his Reſurrection, *breathed (or blowed) upon his Diſciples, and ſaid, receive ye a holy Spirit*, (for here πνευμα αγιον is without the Particle το, which in the *Greek* fixes it to *the* Holy Spirit, as a *Weſtminſter Grammar* decides of this Text) we ſuppoſe therefore, from this Manner of our adored Lord, that the breathing or blowing was ſignificative, of what ſhould attend thoſe, that were to be veſted with the Spirit exrraordinarily: And in Truth, the very Word *Pneumaticos*, uſed in the New Teſtament to expreſs thoſe who had the extraordinary Gifts, is both by ſacred and prophane Authors, taken by the Antients to mean a Perſon poſſeſſed by a Spirit, and by the *Greek* Dictionary does include alſo at the ſame Time, the Senſe of one *irregularly breathing*. Indeed, both in the *Greek* and *Latin*, the Words that expreſs Divine Inſpiration, have a plain Reference to ſomewhat in breathing or blowing: And whoever pleaſes to look into Dr. *Grabe*'s Gleanings out of the antient Fathers, *Part* ii. *p.* 93. and 237. may read there, that *Heracleon*, *Irenæus* and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, do uſe the Word above rendred *blowing*, εμφυσημα, to expreſs the Eſtate of a Perſon, inſpired extraordinarily.

§ 22. Thus out of *Euſebius* we are informed, how the Almighty Power wrought by Viſions, Dream and Voice, to the Converſion of Infidels, the reſtoring of the erroni-

ous,

ous, the directing of publick Affairs in the Churches, the reforming of the vicious, and the conſtituting of Biſhops. There has been alſo in thoſe Inſtances, ſome mention of the Gift of *Propheſying*, but this latter Point will more clearly be manifeſted by what follows, that is drawn from other Authors, of much Note in thoſe Times. But before we proceed to Citations from them, we ſhall here remark, what Mr. *Dodwell* notes further, of theſe Prophetical Times, in his *Second Diſſertation* on *Irenæus*, to this Effect; " where the Apoſtle (ſays he) 1 *Cor.* xiv. 26. ſaith, " *Every one of you, when ye come together, hath a Pſalm, hath* " *a Doctrine, hath a Tongue, hath a Revelation, hath an In-* " *terpretation*; theſe were ſeveral Offices to be aſcribed " to the Holy Spirit; but that of *Doctrine* included the " Gift of Knowledge inſpir'd, which was with that other " of diſcerning of Spirits, the moſt regarded for Govern- " ment in the Church; and whilſt there were Men re- " nowned in the Churches, for thoſe Spiritual Gifts, that " were fit otherwiſe to be taken into that Truſt, many " Inſcriptions of Epiſtles directed to entire Churches, " ſhew, that they were ſo ſet over them; for in thoſe Epi- " ſtles, the Expreſſion, *Grace be multiplied unto ye*, ſigni- " fy'd a Prayer, that beſides thoſe extraordinary Gifts, where- " with they already abounded, they might be filled with " more Plenty of yet greater ones; which Form of Sa- " lutation, as it was very common, it imply'd, that the " Gifts themſelves were ſo too, nor have we any Reaſon to " think, that any Church was deſtitute of them, in that " Eſtate of Things: Among other Signs attending the " *Manifeſtation* of the Prophetick Spirit, was that chiefly " of a glancing Light, as of Fire, which often came up- " on the Baptiz'd, which alſo among the *Jews*, was " thought to be the *Shechinah*, that is, the Symbol of the " Divine Preſence. Unto this Appearance was apply'd " the Word of *John Baptiſt*, touching our Saviour, *He* " *ſhall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with Fire.* And " concerning this *Shechinah*, or glorious Light, *Juſtin Mar-* " *tyr* quotes it, as written in the Goſpels, (and the very an- " tient Manuſcript of St. *Germans*, and ſome *Latin* Verſi- " ons and other Authorities have it to this Day) on *Mat.* " iii. 16. that when our Lord went down into *Jordan, a* " *Light ſhone upon the Place.* Thus the Baptiſm of our " Saviour, was in its Manner a Pattern of the Baptiſm, " wherewith he would baptize others. Wherefore, when " after his Reſurrection He ſaid, ye ſhall be baptized

" with the Holy Spirit not many Days hence, the Sym-
" bol of that Baptiſm on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, appear'd
" alſo in the Tongues of Fire, which anſwer'd to the
" *Shechinah*, according to the ſaid Prophecy of *John Bap-*
" *tiſt*; among other Appeals to the Direction of the Spi-
" rit, in thoſe Prophetick Times, was that alſo of caſt-
" ing Lots, *Acts* i. 24---26. which was antiently of Uſe
" in the Caſes of *Achan*, *Jonathan*, and King *Saul*, 1 *Sam.*
" xiv. 41. and this caſting of Lots, was ſo peculiarly in
" Uſe among the *Clergy*, with Prayers on urgent Occaſi-
" ons, that the very Word *Cleeros* (rendred, *Part*, in *Acts*
" i. 17, 25.) ſignifying a Lot, we believe gave them
" that Compellation; neither is it likely, that this Cu-
" ſtom of drawing Lots on that Occaſion did wholly
" ceaſe, till all the extraordinary Gifs of the Spirit, de-
" parted out of the Church.

§ 23. Hitherto in the Proof and exhibiting of Inſtan-ces of the Prophetick Spirit's Abode in the Church, du-ring the Third Century, we have uſed chiefly the Re-port of *Euſebius*, the Hiſtorian of thoſe Times; but now we proceed to the Teſtimony of Authors, who do not purpoſely write Hiſtory, but ſuch, as in the Method and Courſe of their Argument, are led accidentally to inſiſt, on the Exiſtence of the Spirit of Prophecy in their times; thus in the Treatiſe of *Tertullian* to *Scapula*, *Cap.* iv. he ſays, " Theſe Miraculous Powers among the
" Chriſtians, you may be informed of, by the Heathen
" Notaries and Lawyers, who themſelves have receiv'd
" Benefits from them; for we ſpeak not of the common
" People, but many Perſons of Diſtinction and Quality,
" are thus deliver'd from Devils, and from divers Diſeaſes;
" even *Severus* the Emperor himſelf, had reaſon in this
" Caſe to remember the Chriſtians, ſince *Proculus* by A-
" nointing with Oil, did once Cure him: *Caracalla* alſo
" the Emperor, Succeſſor to *Severus*, found the like Bene-
" fit from *Euodius* a Chriſtian, who was his Foſter Father,
" and on the former Account, was retained in his Court,
" to the Day of his Death: And as the Caſting out of De-
" vils, and Curing all Diſeaſes, did ſtill continue among
" the Signs, that were to follow, by the Promiſe of Chriſt,
" them who Believ'd in his Name, and were now exerci-
" ſed upon the Perſons of Unbelievers for their Conviction"
ſo, the ſevere Diſcipline of the Spirit, or rather the Father-
ly Chaſtiſement of God by his immediate Hand upon Chri-
ſtians

ſtians themſelves, *Tertullian* gives us two Examples of, in his time, in his Tract touching Plays in the Theater, *Cap.* 26. for he mentions one Chriſtian Woman, who going to thoſe Spectacles, came back poſſeſſed with a Devil; the other Chriſtian Woman, that very Night after ſhe had been at a Tragedy, ſaw in a Dream a Winding-Sheet, and was upbraided with the Name of the Tragedian, and ſhe lived not five Days after it.

§ 24. There is not one ſingle Tract peradventure among the Ancients, of more univerſal Approbation than the Apology of *Tertullian* for the Chriſtian Religion; therein we find him Challenging all the Powers of Darkneſs, and their boldeſt Votaries to deny, the Arm of the Lord ſtretched out, in Signs and mighty Wonders done by Chriſtians, in the Name of their triumphant Jeſus. "Hitherto, ſays he, "we have uſed Words, we will now come to a demonſtration of the very thing; that your *Gentile* Gods are no "one of them, greater than another; for a deciſion of the "Point, let any one that is judged to be poſſeſſed by a "Devil, be brought into open Court before your Tribunals; when that Spirit ſhall be commanded by a Chriſtian to ſpeak, he ſhall as truly confeſs himſelf a Devil "there, as elſewhere he falſly claims to be a God; or let "one equally be produced, who is among you *Gentiles*, "judged to be *inſpir'd of God*, who waits at your Altars, "and is eſteem'd a ſacred Perſon by you; nay, tho' he be "*acted by one* of your moſt venerated Deities, be it *Diana* "the Heavenly Virgin, the Promiſer of Rain, or *Æſculapius* that preſcribes you Medicines, and who pretends to "relieve the dying; yet theſe or any others, when they "are ſummon'd, if they dare to lie unto the Chriſtian "ſummoning, and if they do not confeſs themſelves openly to be Devils, then let that reproachful Chriſtian's "Blood, be ſpilt by you on the ſpot. What can be more "manifeſting Proof then this? What a more deciſive Trial to judge upon? The Simplicity of Truth is open in "this Caſe, to your Examination; the particular Chriſtian's own Vertue alone can ſtand him in Stead here; nothing of magical Arts, or any other juggling to deceive, "will be practicable: If your Eyes and Ears are permitted "to be Judges, ye are not called to believe us upon our "Words only." Who can ſurmiſe, that ſo open a Challenge as this, ſhould be given to the *Pagan* Deities, if there was not Powers ſtill ſubſiſting among the Chriſtians

to

to make good the Trial; and indeed the Author being aſſured of Victory therein, from many Evidences of the Fact, triumphs over the enſlaved Devils, in the Manner following; " If they be really Gods, why do they belie " themſelves, in acknowledging to be Devils? Is it, do ye " think, to pleaſe us Chriſtians? Therefore, even now, is " your Deity ſubjected to Chriſtians. A fine Deity in- " deed, that is ſubject unto a Man! Surely thoſe who " elſewhere are worſhipp'd for Gods, would not, if they " could help it, depoſe themſelves from that Dignity, and " give their own Confeſſions, that they are Devils. But " indeed, they know that Our CHRIST is their " Judge, and that they are by an uncontrollable Authori- " ty, made ſubject to his Servants; therefore from our " Touch and *Breath*, they flie (affrighted with the View of " avenging Flames) out of the Bodies where they did re- " ſide, unwillingly and with Grief in your Preſence."

§ 25. *Tertullian* who dy'd about *Anno Domini* 231. tells us moreover, in his *Preſcriptions againſt Hereſy*, of a certain Teacher, *gifted with the inſpir'd Grace of Knowledge*; and in his Tract concerning the Soul, *Cap.* ix. he ſays, " We " had Right after St. *John*, to expect *Propheſyings*, and we " do now acknowledge *the ſaid Spiritual Gifts*; for there " is at this Day, living among us, a Siſter, who is Par- " taker of the Gift of Revelations, which ſhe receives " *under Extacy in the Spirit*, in the publick Congregation; " wherein ſhe converſes with Angels, ſometimes alſo, with " the Lord, and ſeeth and heareth Divine Myſteries, and " diſcovereth the Hearts of ſome Perſons, and does mini- " ſter Succour to ſuch as deſire it; and whilſt the Scrip- " tures are read, or Pſalms are ſinging, or they are Preach- " ing, or Prayers are offer'd up, Subjects from thence are " miniſter'd in her Viſions: We had once ſome Diſcour- " ſes touching the Soul, whilſt this Siſter *was in the Spi- " rit*; after the publick Services were over, and moſt of " the People gone, ſhe acquainted us with what ſhe ſaw, " as the Cuſtom was; for theſe Things are heedfully di- " geſted, that they may be duly proved; among other " Things, ſhe then told us, that a material Soul was ſet " before her, and the Spirit was beheld by her, being of " a Quality not void and empty, but of the Colour of " the Sky, and of a thin Brightneſs, preſerving the Form " throughout of the human Body. This was the Viſion, " God is Witneſs, as the Apoſtle, *(Paul,)* the fitting Pro-

" miſer

" miſer of the Gifts, which were to be exiſtent in the " Church. But thou, O *Hermogenes*, (the Philoſopher to " whom the Treatiſe is addreſſed) wilt not believe, unleſs " the Thing it ſelf in all Particulars, do perſwade thee."

§ 26. Contemporary with *Tertullian*, was *Theophilus*, whoſe Writings to his *Pagan* Friend *Autolicus*, in Behalf of the Chriſtian Religion, we have ſtill extant; wherein he mentions, " *Men carrying, or carried by the Spirit*, being " inſpir'd of God, as 2 *Pet.* i. 21. ſaying, that thereby they " were conſtituted Prophets, and became the *Organs* of " God; and *Marcarius* commenting on the Word, *Organ*, " (ſuppoſe a Trumpet or any Pipe) ſays, as the human " Breath paſſing thro' a Trumpet ſpeaks, ſo the Spirit " celebrates God in Pſalms, and Hymns, and Prayers, paſ- " ſing thro' Perſons *(Pneumatophorous) carried of the Spirit*; " and ſays *Theophilus*, *p.* xciii. As the Sea needs the per- " petual Influx of the Rivers, elſe it would dry up, ſo " would the Wickedneſs of the World conſume it, were " it not for the (written) Law of God, and the *Prophets*, " from which (as from Fountains of living Water) do " flow, and *perpetually* iſſue forth Conſolation, Mercy and " Righteouſneſs, and the teaching of the Holy Com- " mands of God; and his Teſtimony alſo concurs, touch- " ing the ſtill reſiding Power among Chriſtians, to caſt " out Devils; for, ſays he, *p.* lxxvii. 78. Unto this Day " the unclean Spirits are forced by Chriſtians, to confeſs " their own Shame, and unwillingly forſake their Inha- " bitations, when adjured in the Name of Chriſt; and " from thence *Theophilus* argues, that the Spirits *acting on* " *the Gentile Poets, or Prophets*, and which the *Pagans* ſet in " Oppoſition to the Chriſtian Prophet, were evil ones, ſince " thoſe very Poets when diſpoſſeſs'd, own'd themſelves to " have been poſſeſs'd by Devils." After this Author, and about the Year 237. *Minutius Felix* is another Wit- neſs of the like extraordinary Gifts ſtill in the Church; for in his Book concerning *Octavius*, he ſays to the Hea- then, " All theſe Things are known to moſt among you, " that as often as they are requir'd by us, they are driven " to confeſs themſelves Devils, and to depart out of Bo- " dies, forced by our Words, as by Scourges, Flames or " Thunder; *Saturn* himſelf, and *Serapis*, and *Jupiter*, and " the chief of thoſe Gods ye worſhip, being overcome " with Grief, ſpeak out to their own Shame, which they " would not falſly do, in the Preſence of ye their Ado-

" ters:

" rers: Believe them therefore, when they witneſs of " themſelves, that they are Devils; being adjured by the " only true God, they reluctıng and in Pain, do rore in " thoſe Bodies, and either *inſtantly* go forth, *or gradually* " withdraw from them, as the Faith of the Poſſeſſed aſ- " ſiſts, or the *Gift of him* that healeth, carries it. Thus, " thoſe evil Spirits, who at a Diſtance egged you on, in " Droves againſt the Chriſtians, do when at hand, fly " from us: For, as it is natural to hate what is feared, " ſo they thro' Fear of themſelves, do ſecretly ſolicit your " Minds to hate us Chriſtians." The ſame Author giving an Account of the Manner of that Conference, between *Cæcilius* a Heathen Philoſopher, and *Octavius* a Chriſtian, wherein the former was convinced of his Error, and brought over to the Faith of Chriſt; he concludes the Relation with the Commendation of *Octavius*, ſaying, " He enjoys a *bright* " *Gift* from God, from whom *being inſpir'd*, he beſought it, " and obtain'd it for his Help." And tho' theſe latter Evidences are not expreſs to the Gift of Propheſying, the leſs Mention of That may poſſibly be more therein due to ſome other Cauſes, than the Scarcity of it: However, we find, that the ſame was not yet extinguiſhed, even by the Author now next quoted, and Mr. *Dodwell* ſays, it is acknowledg'd to be the moſt permanent of any of the extraordinary Favours of Chriſt to his Church.

§ 27. The Works of *Origen* are very many, and voluminous; and in the Subject we are upon, Mr. *Dodwell's Second Diſſertation* on *Irenæus*, p. 184,--187. makes no leſs than twenty Quotations out of them; wherefore, being my ſelf not at Leiſure enough, to look into the Original, I here take the Liberty to draw the enſuing Matters from that Reporter. The Subſtance then of *Origen's* Teſtimony, touching the Continuance of the Gifts of the Spirit extraordinary, is, " That in his Time, who lived to " about the Year 255. there were many Eye-Witneſſes " to prove, that Devils were frequently caſt out, by the " bare Mention of the Name of Chriſt, without any ſort " of Means or Obſervations, other than Prayers and Ad- " jurations. This was done ſometimes, in the very Pla- " ces wherein they were worſhipped; and ſometimes not " only the Bodies of the Poſſeſſed, were freed from their " Vexations, but even the very Souls; inſomuch that " many of thoſe unhappy People, were almoſt againſt " their Wills, drawn to embrace the Chriſtian Religion; " ſome

" ſome Spirit ſuddenly changing their Mind, and turning " it from the Hatred precedently embib'd againſt the " *Word*, ſo that after they had receiv'd ſome Viſions, pre- " ſented them either ſleeping or waking, they demurr'd " not to encounter Death, for the Sake *of it*; many Things " of which kind, he had ſeen done in his Preſence, which " if he ſhould give a Relation of, he knew the Infidels " would but laugh at them; and yet he devoutly calls " God to witneſs, for his own Conſcience, that they were " really true. He ſays, that the Chriſtian Religion had " even then, the Demonſtration to it, which the Apoſtle " would have call'd, *the Manifeſtation of the Spirit, and* " *of Power*, and which he himſelf terms *wonderful Pow-* " *ers*; that there were in his Age, Perſons who directed " their Ways, by the good Pleaſure of the *Word*, (which " I ſuppoſe means, Chriſt inſpiring;) moreover the Gift " of Healing did abound, and ſome diſtracted People " were cur'd by the Name of Jeſus; and if there was Need, " he could bring a Hundred Inſtances of the moſt vici- " ous and profligate Livers, who were by one ſudden Act " of the Spirit, (as by Viſion, or the like) turned about " into the moſt exemplary and luminous Courſes of Life; " and theſe were of different Qualities, both *Greeks* and " *Barbarians*, Philoſophers and fooliſh Perſons, who touch- " ed with the Love of God, ſeem'd even ambitious to " outgo one another unto Death, in the Chriſtian Piety."

§ 28. *Origen* further ſays, " that among the *Jews* there " remained then no *Prophets*, nor any wonderful Signs; " but there are found among Chriſtians the *Footſteps, or* " *Remains* of theſe, even now, after ſo long a Time, and " even *ſome Things greater*; for they are faithful, who " uſually ſay, we our ſelves have *ſeen them*: And in Evi- " dence of the miraculous Powers receiv'd by Faith, this " is a Sign, that by the Name of Jeſus, unto this Day, " the Sick are healed, even ſuch as God pleaſes to " have cured: I my ſelf (ſays he) have ſeen many of " them, who were deliver'd from Lunacies, and a Multi- " tude of other the moſt afflicting Diſeaſes. In the As- " ſemblies of the Church, there ſtill remained ſome, " who had *the Gift of diſcerning Spirits, angelical and hu-* " *man*, (the greateſt Evidence of Prophecy) and touching " the latter, what lay hid in the Secrets of the Heart, " was expoſed to the Notice of many, to the Shame of " thoſe, who were conſcious of ſuch Guilt. There was

" ſome

" ſome difference in the Power of caſting out Devils;
" ſometimes the Name of Jeſus alone did ſuffice; at o-
" ther, this Power given to the Apoſtles, was exerciſed,
" after Prayers and a ſolemn *Adjuration*, from whence the
" latter Ages, more than the Primitive, call'd the Gifted
" Perſons, Exorciſts: There were alſo in that Age, other
" unexceptionable Miracles, whereof *Origen* himſelf, a-
" mong many more Witneſſes beyond exception in the
" Church, does bear his Teſtimony. But, ſays Mr. *Dod-*
" *well*, when *Origen* tells us, There were found among
" Chriſtians, the *remains of Prophecy*, and of wonderful
" Signs in his Time, we are not to take it abſolutely, as if
" theſe were in themſelves rare or ſleight Footſteps of
" them; but by a Compariſon with the Apoſtolick Age,
" (whereon he is then inſiſting) they were more ſeldom
" found, and in the degree of their manifeſtation, leſs; and
" the moſt we can underſtand by that Expreſſion, is, that
" in his Time they were decreas'd from the Plenty and
" Power of them, during the Second Century, as deſcrib'd
" by *Irenæus* and others; theſe *Remains of Prophecyings*, how-
" ever were ſuch, that upon them he argues, as *Juſtin*
" *Martyr* had done before in the Second Century, That the
" *Jews* were then without Prophets, and that the Spirit
" of Prophecy, ſtill extant among Chriſtians, was Proof,
" that God did favour the latter, as his peculiar People,
" inſtead of the *Jews* formerly, in that manner honour'd."

§ 29. Touching *Prophecy, and thoſe Things greater* than miraculous Signs, which *Origen* mentions to remain among Chriſtians, we cannot conceive what ſhould induce him to add, *they are faithful who commonly ſay, we our ſelves have ſeen them*, but ſome Reproaches attending that Confeſſion of theirs; for in the Sequel hereof, it will appear, that about the Time we now treat of, there were Principles generally receiv'd among Chriſtians, that were deſtructive of Faith, in all the Ways of immediate Revelation from God, by Viſion, Dream, Voice, and Prophecy. To proceed however, in thoſe Acknowledgements we find of them, we ought to remind the Reader, that the Evidence hitherto given of Facts poſitive, has been all taken from thoſe, who wrote and bore Witneſs of the Times they ſeverally lived in; even the Citations drawn from the Hiſtorian *Euſebius* are from Authors, out of whom he gives ſome Specimen or Extract, and thoſe Authors wrote ſeverally, every one of his own Age; ſo that hitherto what has been ſaid upon this

this Point, ſtands upon as firm and clear a Foundation of Truth, as the Nature of Proof among Men, can in any thing whatſoever admit, touching Matters of Time paſs'd: And being loth to admit any thing into this Chronological Abridgement, that might weaken the Strength of its Foundation, as to the Certainty and Simplicity of Truth, in the Matters contained in it; I ſhall paſs over much Evidence to the like Import, that may be found in the Life of *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, written 30 or 50 Years after his Death, by a Biſhop of *Niſſa* of great Repute, becauſe he, the latter, wrote the ſame meerly and only upon Report of the Facts therein contained. *Thaumaturgus* was a Scholar of *Origen*'s, at his Lecture in *Alexandria*, as was alſo *Dyoniſius*, who has been already quoted, a moſt poſitive and expreſs Witneſs of Revelations in his Time: It may be however, worthy of Remark, that all theſe three noted Perſons in the Church, and Witneſſes of the ſurviving Powers of the Holy Spirit in it, were Inhabitants in *Africa*; for it will be manifeſt, by what follows here immediately, and in the Third Part of this Treatiſe, that the Chriſtians in *Africa* preſerv'd longer a Reverential Regard to the Ways of the Prophetick Spirit revealing, than in other Parts of the Chriſtian World.

§ 30. Having thus far traced Step by Step, the Courſe of the extraordinary Gifts abiding, as the gracious Teſtimony of Chriſt's peculiar Preſence with his Church; the ſeveral Links of Proof, from many ſignal Confeſſors of it, being ſo cloſely connected, that hitherto there is not one Space of above 20 Years, without remarkable Atteſtation, ſurviving to this Day, touching this Matter. We are come down ſo far, in the Deduction hiſtorical, of theſe great Things, for the higheſt Honour and Glory of our Sovereign Lord, the great Prophet, as well as bleſſed, and only Potentate of his Church; that there remain henceforth from the Death of *Dyoniſius*, but about 30 Years, to bring Teſtimony of, for compleating the whole Scheme of Evidence unqueſtionable, that the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and immediate Revelations from God, did continue in the Church 300 Years from the Year of Grace, (that is, the Birth of our High and Mighty Saviour) which uſher'd in unparalell'd good Tydings of great Joy, unto all People. And tho' we ſhall not here deduce the Proofs, lower than the Year 300. it ought not to be underſtood, that thoſe Gifts and Revelations were then extinct; for I make no doubt,

doubt, but the ſame are provable beyond that Time. Indeed, whenſoever they ceaſe to be provable, from the Acknowledgments publick of Perſons, whoſe Character might carry a Weight with it, unto us at this vaſt Remove of Ages; it will not at all follow, that thoſe Gifts and Graces, or Favours divine, were wholly withdrawn; but it is notorious unto every Man, who has ſeen but the leaſt Glympſe of Hiſtory, that the whole texture and frame of Things in the Church, took a new Turn from the Secular Powers, which after the Converſion of the Emperor *Conſtantine*, were forthwith exercis'd in the Church: Neither is it to be wonder'd, that Honours and Riches flowing in with them, ſhould vitiate the Minds of the very Miniſters of Chriſt, who were by their Goſpel Conſtitution, to be the Lights and Salt of the Earth, for all manner of Humility and Godlineſs of Life. But indeed, the main Reaſon why I ſhall proceed no further than the End of the Third Century, in proving the Continuance of the Spirit extraordinary, is, That 'tis evident to me, that the Chriſtians, even before that time, and much more after, were ſo fallen away generally, from their Reverence to, and Love of the Spirit, that by the contrary and oppoſing Principles they had admitted and imbibed, they were morally incapable of owning, what was truly Prophecy and Revelation from God, according to the Rules of Scripture, the undeficient Touchſtone to judge by; and even according to the Rules, whereon the Chriſtians themſelves in the Second Century, had admitted them.

§ 31. The Teſtimonies before given, we conceive to have reach'd unto the Year 268. and for the ſmall Term remaining to fill up the Third Century, the enſuing Relations may be abundantly ſufficient; the chief of them indeed, will be drawn from the Works of St. *Cyprian*, Biſhop of *Carthage*, the chief City of *Africa*, who dy'd before the end of that Period. But his Evidences are ſo numerous and expreſs, as may however well ſuffice alone by themſelves, becauſe they include the Acknowledgment of ſeveral Churches which dy'd not with him. But becauſe of his Eminence for Piety, he dying a Martyr for the Faith of Chriſt, and by reaſon of his Learning, that makes him to this Day of great Eſteem, and by reaſon of his unblemiſhed Character, to add an Energy to the Certainty of whatſoever he gives a poſitive Teſtimony of, they deſerve a more ample Relation here: Wherefore, from the

the Volume of his Works it appears among other like Things, " that *Celerinus*, a Miniſter at *Carthage*, being by " that Church appointed to ſome particular Office, which " he thro' Humility ſcrupled to accept of; he was there- " upon, admoniſhed in a Viſion by Night, and forced by " that Divine Command, not to refuſe the Charge ten- " der'd him." This Inſtance of Divine Revelation to *Celerinus*, is related in the 34th Epiſtle of *Cyprian*; and in the 52d Epiſtle, he gives another, in the Perſon of *Cornelius*, who had from God, and Chriſt immediately, a Deſignation to the Office of a publick Miniſter in the Church. And this particular Point, of the extraordinary Inſpection of God, in the Government and comforting Direction of his People, was ſo common in thoſe Days, or at leaſt in the Parts where *Cyprian* was converſant, that not only he himſelf, openly profeſſed to hold by that Title, but judging of Things in general, by thoſe he had within his View, he does in many Places intimate, That no one was rightly conſtituted to the publick Miniſtry, who was without ſome extraordinary Significations of the Spirit, to confirm it to him. And therefore, from the Authority of a Prophetick Viſion to himſelf, he ſays, (*Ep.* 69.) " He that " refuſes to believe Chriſt when He conſtitutes a Mini- " ſter, let him begin then to believe it, when Chriſt *aven-* " *ges* that Miniſter."

§ 32. There are Perſons, who will argue the certain Exiſtence of the Powers extraordinary continuing in the Church, unto the Time of *Conſtantine*, from the natural Impoſſibility without them, of keeping the ſtrict Diſcipline upon Manners, and erronious Principles, which was remarkable in the Communion of Chriſtians, before they had any thing of ſecular Rules, Meaſures or Penalties, to enforce it by: And tho' I believe, this Way of Argument, is valid ſo far, as to produce a ſtrong Preſumption, that thoſe Gifts and Powers, were much more numerous among them, either mediately by the Prophets, or immediately by the Divine Hand exerciſed, than we have clear and authentick Records to prove; yet we muſt content our ſelves to go on, in what appears, and is handed down to us from theſe, of that kind. And methinks, it is not a little Hint of theſe Matters, that St. *Cyprian* gives us in ſeveral of his Epiſtles, even in the Declenſion of that primitive Diſcipline, which ſoon after him had a Period, but which was never afterwards matched by all the Severities and coercive Methods, that the imperious Pride of

Man could impoſe, or the Councils of the Clergy invent: For ſays St. *Cyprian*, " Some that were receiv'd into the " Church by Baptiſm, when afterwards they begun to fall " away into ſinful Courſes, they uſed to be poſſeſſed and " torn by an evil Spirit; (which may poſſibly be in Part, " what the Apoſtle means, by delivering ſuch a one to " Satan;) and concerning thoſe who fell away from their " Profeſſion of Faith, in Time of Perſecution, he adds, " One of thoſe who went to the Magiſtrate to renounce " his Faith, after he had done ſo, he was ſtruck dumb: " Whereas alſo in ſome Caſes, they were forbidden to " frequent the publick Baths for Pleaſure; a Woman (ſays " he) that would go thither, was ſurpriz'd on the Spot " by an evil Spirit, and dropping down, ſhe tore that " Tongue with her Teeth, wherewith ſhe had either im- " piouſly talked or fed; nor could ſhe outlive it long, but " dy'd with Torments in her Belly and Bowels. Thus al- " ſo *Cyprian* gives an Account of two Perſons, who had for " clandeſtine Ends ſacrificed to Idols, and yet preſented " themſelves to the Communion of Chriſtians to their " miſerable Sorrows, in his Preſence: One of theſe, was a " Woman, who as ſoon as ſhe had receiv'd the Bread, it " was ſcarce ſwallowed, but as if ſhe had taken ſome " deadly Poiſon, or a Sword had pierced her, ſhe fell into " dolorous Anguiſh and Faintings, and ſinking under the " Load of her own Guilt, with Flutterings and Trem- " bling, ſhe dropt down dead. The whole Church were " Spectators of this latter Tragedy; and the former with " a Third, tho' very diſmal, I omit for Brevity. And " indeed, far beyond a few Particulars, was the Church " Diſcipline of theſe Ages, guarded as with the avenging " Sword of a Cherubim: For, ſays *Cyprian*, there are ma- " ny at this Day, who in the Want of due Humiliation " and Repentance, for their Faults, are poſſeſſed by im- " pure Spirits, and are driven in to melancholy Deſpair, and " even downright Madneſs. However tremendous, yet ſo " common, were ſuch like judicial Strokes, from the im- " mediate Hand of Heaven, that the ſame Author ſays, they were equal in Number to that of Delinquents, all over the Chriſtian World; nay, *Tertullian*'s *Apology*, p. 39. ſays, " that whoſoever did prove to be ſuch a Delinquent, as to " be excluded from a Participation, in the publick As- " ſemblies for Prayer and the Communion; he was cer- " tain to meet with, from the Preſence of the Lord, Evi- " dences of a foregoing Sentence, to the future Judgment.

§ 33. We

§ 33. We find by St. *Cyprian*'s Declaration of a Viſion to him, a Threatning denounced; and thoſe forementi-on'd Terrors of the Lord (begun by the Stroke upon *Ananias* and *Saphira*) were doubtleſs inſiſted on, and threatned by the Spirit of Prophecy, whilſt He continued in any ſort, publickly own'd, and ſubmitted to: Indeed, that Gift of diſcerning the latent Vileneſs in the Heart, does ſeem to imply, that the Searcher of it, was then ſometimes the openly Avenger too, upon the contumacious and impenitent, for the Honour of his Spirit, whoſe Office was to convince the World of Sin, and of Judgment conſequent: Even thus, it was true, that our Saviour came, not only to bring Peace to Believers, but a Sword upon the Head of the abominable, in his Eye. Nevertheleſs, this Way of the Divine Theocracy, or immediate Superintendency of God over his Church, was a Priviledge expreſſive highly of his Favour to it; whilſt thereby, the Societies of Chriſtians, were preſerv'd and fenced, as well from hypocritical Deceivers, as from the Contagion of Members, openly corrupt and vicious; but this was the peculiar Glory of the Times of the Spirit, which continued as long as Men were willing to ſubmit to his leading and preſiding over them, and would endure to be taught, reproved and governed, by the immediate Voice and Word of the Lord. But tho' theſe Things were never ſo manifeſtly open to View, thoſe who had a ſecret Declivity to vile Affections and Paſſions, and to the Love of Worldly Pleaſure, Profit and Honour, muſt of Neceſſity be weary of ſo ſtrict an Inſpector and Superintendent over them; who was a Diſcerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, and ſtruck his Terrors, even to between the Joints and the Marrow. Thus therefore, whilſt we find ſuch Men as *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, celebrating and recording the Glory of God on that Account; *Euſebius* the Courtier was quite of another Turn; and therefore we find him unwilling in his Hiſtory to perpetuate the Memory of their ſtill ſurviving and immortal Writings, but omitting the very Mention of them, that they might be bury'd in Obſcurity as much as in him lay.

§ 34. Now to trace the Thread of Divine Manifeſtations reported by *Cyprian*; in his Tract touching Mortality, "there is mention of one of his Fellow Miniſters, who "grew weary of his Bodily Infirmities, and yet when

" Death ſeem'd to be approaching, with much Concern
" beſought of God, a Reprieve from it. Whilſt he was
" thus on the Brink of the Grave, and during the Time
" of his Prayer, there appear'd nigh him, a tall young
" Man, of a clear Complexion, of ſo bright and luminous
" an Aſpect, that ſcarce could the human Eye ſteddily be-
" hold him; who ſpake with a Voice and Air of ſome In-
" dignation, ſaying, *Ye are impatient to ſuffer, and yet un-*
" *willing to go hence, what ſhall I do with you?* Our Brother
" and Partner, ſays *Cyprian*, heard this near his Death, that
" he might tell it to thoſe that remain; for, not for him-
" ſelf only, but for our uſe too, was this Admonition ſent;
" he a Miniſter of God, was reproved for begging to be
" abſent from the Lord, and to abide in this Life, that
" we might acknowledge, what is expedient for the reſt,
" who are under concern about Perſecution, and yet would
" be contriving for a temporal Futurity, and not readily
" acquieſcing with His calling us from hence. Even to
" my ſelf alſo (ſays *Cyprian*) the leaſt and loweſt; it has
" been often reveal'd (even as often, as the Divine Con-
" deſcention would favor me, with his Command) that
" I ſhould publickly Preach, and earneſtly inculcate, that
" our Brethren, reſcued from this World, by Heaven's
" kind removal of them, ought not to be lamented, when
" we know them not to be loſt, but only ſpeeding before,
" to that Port whither we are Sailing; we ought indeed,
" to deſire them before the Releaſe, but not to bewail them
" after it; nor take Mourning Habits here for thoſe, who
" are there Cloathed with Robes of Triumphing Joy;
" for if we do otherwiſe, the Heathen may juſtly upbraid us
" in Lamenting thoſe, as if loſt and periſhed, whom we
" ſay, do now live with God; and as if the Witneſs of our
" Hearts and Conſciences, did not concur with the Pro-
" feſſion of our Mouths."

§ 35. I have in the laſt inſtance of Prophetick Viſion, mixed a little of that admirable Inſtruction of Doctrine, joined uſually with thoſe Celeſtial Vouchſafements, granted to this illuſtrious Prophet in the Chriſtian Church; that Title is given him, becauſe I know not how the Diſtinction of a Prophet, can be deny'd to a Perſon, who Publiſh'd near Twenty Viſions receiv'd by him, for the Inſtruction, Comfort, and Edification of the then Church, and gave them out in the Name and Character of the Word of the Lord to him. To recite all theſe Viſions here,

as

as they are in the Circumſtances deſcribed, and with the Doctrine wherewith they are apply'd and enforced, would be beyond the meaſures uſed in any Part of this compendious Tract; the Deſign whereof, is but to ſhew the Certainty of the Spirit of Prophecy's exiſting, in thoſe Ages, wherein ſome Patterns and Preſidents of it, are exhibited; and I think the Number of theſe Divine Communications recorded by St. *Cyprian*, to have been granted unto many others, is ſo plentiful, that they are competent Proof of the Continuance of ſuch, for ſome Time, beyond that of his own Natural Life; for the Spirit which liberally gave forth theſe, as he publiſhes them, cannot be thought extinguiſhed, and to expire, in thoſe Exertions on others, with his mortal Breath. There needs but little Exerciſe of the ſame Reaſon for Deduction and Inference, that is allowed among Men, in all other Caſes, to make the Premiſes laid down from the Teſtimony of this Author, valid in this Point alſo, of the continuance of thoſe Graces, as above; notwithſtanding the willful Silence of the Hiſtorian *Euſebius*, after this Term.

§ 36. But to give ſome few more Specimens of what occurs in the large Folio Volume of the ſubſiſting Works of this great Father in the Primitive Church; "*Pontius* a Miniſter of the Church at *Carthage*, the Companion of St. *Cyprian*, during his laſt Sufferings, and the Writer of his Life after them, tells us, that *his Mind* was enriched by God in all Things, and his Faith firmly obedient to the Divine Will made known by Revelations; ſo that he believ'd he ſhould have ſinned, even by Martyrdom, when he was once commanded (as *Dyoniſius* forementiond was) to retire from his Houſe: Wherefore, this Man, whoſe Abilities were ennobled chiefly, by being ſpiritually formed, was preſerved a while, to adminiſter with a Celeſtial Hand, Medicines to the wounded and weak, and what Way ſoever infirm. Indeed, where was the Man like to him, that ſtrengthen'd ſo many Martyrs, with the Exhortation of an *inſpir'd Word*? Who is he, that animated with the Incentive of a Heavenly Trumpet, ſo many ſuffering Confeſſors, and like him ſealed them, as it were, with an Inſcription on their Foreheads, to be reſerved for the future Honour of glorifying their Saviour, by the Teſtimony of Martyrdom? Says *Pontius*, I went along with him, in the Retirement order'd from above, and the firſt Day of our reſting at the Place, whither we withdrew,

" *Cyprian* told me, that before he was quite aſleep, a " Youth in Form beautiful beyond the human, appear'd " to him; who led him to the Town-Houſe, or Court of " Juſtice, where he thought himſelf to approach unto the " *Roman* Magiſtrate on the Bench; the Judge (ſaid he) " was repreſented to look upon me, who, without asking " me any Queſtions, as is uſual on ſuch Occaſions, pre- " ſently began to write on his Table-Book, which I " thought was a Sentence of Condemnation, to be paſs'd " upon me, but what it was, I knew not; then I ſaw " a young Man, ſtanding behind the Judge, who look'd " over his Shoulder, as very curious to obſerve what the " Judge had written; and as if he could not openly tell " me by Words, the young Man expreſſed it to me by " Signs; for, ſtretching forth his Arm, he expreſſed the " Manner of an Executioner, cutting of a Man's Head with " a Stroke, and this was as clear and livelily deſcribed, as " Words could have done it: Wherefore, when I apprehen- " ded the Manner, whereby I was to ſuffer, I inſtantly be- " gan to pray the Reſpit but of *one Day*, to ſet my Af- " fairs in Order. When I had repeated theſe Petitions ſe- " veral Times, the Judge wrote again upon his *Memoran-* " *dum* Book, and I perceived in the Viſion, by the Sere- " nity of his Face, that my reaſonable Requeſt was grant- " ed: And this I was the more certainly aſſured of, by the " foreſaid young Man, who drew nigh me, with expreſſive " Signs of the Delay of the Sentence. I however, ſince I " read not the Sentence, tho' I rejoiced for the ſmall Re- " prieve of it, yet was ſo much affected with Fear, leſt I " ſhould miſtake in the Interpretation thereof, that I " trembled all over, with the Remains of Terror. Now, as the Manner of God's ſpeaking in Viſion to the Prophets, is by the former Part of this Treatiſe explained to be Enigmatical, and in dark Speeches, ſo *Cyprian* himſelf knew not, at the End of this Viſion, what was preciſely the full Import of it; but the Event ſhew'd it plainly; for that very Day twelve-month, after he ſaw theſe Things, he paſs'd into the Poſſeſſion of endleſs Bliſs, by the Separation in a Moment of his Head from the Trunk of an uſeleſs Body.

§ 37. If any will deride the Viſions of this Prophet, they cannot do it upon Principles, other than ſuch, as muſt equally weaken the Authority of Revelation in the Scripture the ſame Way; for we have fully proved, that Prophecy in general,

is there called Vision, and a great Part of the Scripture Prophets we admit, had no other Authority for their Commission (that we know of) but what St. *Cyprian* had. But having given a Specimen of one of his, at large, we may by the Prolixity of it, the better be excused from particularizing all of them, that are related by himself, because it would exceed the purposed Bound, and even Design of this Recital; some few therefore, we shall content our selves herein to note, as that "wherein he saw five Christian Ministers, consulting with the Heathen Magistrates, "how to draw and issue a Proclamation for a Persecution of the Believers in Christ; which very Ministers, afterwards proved Deserters of the Faith, and Encouragers of Multitudes to revolt from it, which appears in "several of his Epistles, and in particular the 40th. In "the 54, 56, and others, he says, we receive often Warnings from the Lord, which in Conscience we think our "selves bound to communicate to you (writing then to entire Churches) that a more terrible Conflict of contending "by Sufferings for the Faith, than ever hitherto has been, "is now just at hand. Therefore, since I have these frequent Heavenly Admonitions by Vision, we ought not to "be disobedient to the Celestial Voice in them; and thus "I exhort ye Pastors, not to forsake the Sheep, in their imminent Danger; but as I continually inculcate unto those by "the Divine Appointment, committed unto me; so when "the Holy Spirit, and the Lord is pleased by repeated Visionary Manifestations, to set before me, the Enemy coming on, to assault us with utmost Violence; I beseech "you, that we may be armed and prepared, and that ye "will also, duly admonish your Flocks." Thus, it seems, did this Man of God, acquit himself of the Trust, by express Command from the Heavenly King, vested in his Hands; that, in the very Provincial Assemblies, or Synods of the Bishops, he laid these Things reveal'd to him, before them, to be more publickly known, and in Testimony against them, who should neglect the Declaration.

§ 38. As to the Guidance of the Flock at *Carthage*, unto which he was made an Overseer, it appears, that he conducted himself, as directed by the Spirit of Prophecy; for, one *Pupianus*, a Person under some Sentence for his Crimes, signifying his Repentance, and earnest Desire to be re-admitted, to full Communion with the Church, *Cyprian* answers in *Ep.* 69. "that tho' he might give Satis-

" faction competent for a Re-admiſſion, yet whilſt there " remains among us, ſays he, a Reverence and Regard to " the Divine Cenſure (intimated upon *Pupianus*) I dare " not permit you to communicate with his Church, be- " fore I conſult my God upon it, and do receive the Di- " rection of ſome Diſcovery from Him, whether I ſhall do " it or not; for I remember, what Chriſt (the great Shep- " herd) did once ſignify to his Servant, who is fearful of " diſobeying his ſovereign Commands; how that, among " other Things, which he was pleaſed to honour me with " the Communication of, he added this, *Whoſoever does not* " *give Credit to Chriſt, when he conſtitutes a Miniſter, will* " *afterwards begin to believe, when that Miniſter is avenged by* " *him.*" In which Sort of Expoſtulation, and concluſive determining of himſelf, we are not to underſtand, that St, *Cyprian* depended only, upon Divine Revelations to himſelf, for his Direction; but as divers others have been already in his Writings ſpecified by Name or ſpecial Definition, to enjoy the extraordinary Communications of the Spirit of Prophecy, as well as himſelf; ſo he expreſſes it to be in his Church at leaſt, much more common than the Inſtances of a few Perſons would make it, as will fully appear by the following Section.

§ 39. The City of *Carthage* where *Cyprian* preſided, being the Capital of moſt Part of *Africa*, he was as it were, a Light ſet upon an Hill; and if any thing was advanced by him, that was not congruous with the Analogy of the Chriſtian Faith, or with the Tenour of Scripture, there wanted not many who envied his Reputation, and therefore would greedily have laid hold of the Occaſion, to have blaſted it; but the Things of the Spirit, which he ſo freely advances, being warranted by the written Word of God, tho' they begun to fall under the Laſh of Ridicule among Chriſtians generally then, could not openly be ſpoken againſt in ſuch an one as he, and therefore no one did then, offer publickly to attack him, on theſe Accounts. And thus the high Character of this Author unblaſted, has been the Means to continue down to us, the Notices above-menion'd of the Divine Benignity to himſelf, and to divers among the Clergy, and to *many among the People*; for, ſays he, *Ep.* 16. " The Diſcipline of God over us, ne- " ver ceaſes both by Night and Day, to correct and re- " prove; for not only by Viſions of the Night, but by " Day, even the innocent Age of *Children* is *filled* among

" us

" us with the Holy Spirit; and they *ſee, and hear, and* " *ſpeak in Extacy*, ſuch Things, as the Lord vouchſafes to " admoniſh and inſtruct us by." In which ſhort Sentence, he declares the Manifeſtations of God, by Viſion, Voice, and Prophecy proper, to be frequent among them, without any Diminution of the Authority thereof, by their proceeding thro' the Inſtrumentality of Babes. Upon which Paſſage, *Rigaltius* the Commentator on St. *Cyprian*'s Works, ſubjoins, " Not only from Dreams and Viſions, " but from, or in *Raptures*, did Perſons of the moſt lauda- " ble Chriſtian Piety, receive Divine Manifeſtations; we " have already noted ſeveral Dreams and Viſions, which " *Cyprian* communicated to his Brethren of the Clergy: " In this Epiſtle he inculcates to them, ſome Admoniti- " ons and Commands, from the *extatical* Declarations of " innocent Children: Rightly does he interpoſe the Words, " *in Extacy*; for the Power of the Divine Spirit coming " upon the Children, did remove and caſt out, whatſo- " ever was in their own proper and natural Mind; ſo " that every one of them, being no longer himſelf, but " *filled (or poſſeſſed)* with that great Inhabitant, neither " thought nor ſaw, nor ſpake any thing, but what that " new Gueſt furniſhed to them. And thus *Tertullian* wri- " ting againſt *Marcion* the Heretick, does maintain, that the " *temporary Seceſſion of Reaſon and Underſtanding*, did agree, " or was the ſame Thing with *Extacy*; for it is unavoi- " dable, ſays he, but that a Perſon *in the Spirit*, do ceaſe " from his own Senſe; therefore in the *extatical*, for a " little Time, Knowledge dies; or at leaſt the human In- " telect is ſo overſhadowed and darkned by a Supervention " of the Divine, that it ſeems for the Interim to be expi- " red; and as *Tertullian* thus deſcribes it, ſo *Chryſoſtom*, " treating of the *Trance* that fell upon St. *Peter*, when he " ſaw the large Veſſel and Sheet deſcending from Heaven, " ſays, A Trance is, as if a Man ſhould ſay, the Soul go- " eth out of the Body."

§ 40. The ſame *Rigaltius*, in his Notes upon ſome Divine Dreams, which *Cyprian* communicated to the Church, ſays on *Ep.* 11. *That it was uſual with the Fathers in the Chriſtian Church, to ſignify by Letters publickly to be read, moſt Things imparted to them in Dreams.* Thus the Faith of God revealing, was not as yet periſhed from the Earth, but we find it owned unto this Period, in all the Ways of Divine Manifeſtation, inſomuch that it uſed to be pub-

lickly

lickly declared, unto the Congregations of the Church. And this Circumſtance fully ſhews, that the Faith of thoſe Subjects was not confined to ſuch, who did receive the ſaid Manifeſtations, or to a few only of their private Acquaintance. As to St. *Cyprian* himſelf, it appears that he acted from a full Aſſurance of Faith, in thoſe to him, and therefore he was (as 'tis ſaid of *Samuel*) faithful to the Lord, as a Prophet; or as St. *Paul* words it, 2 *Cor.* iv. 13. *We having the ſame Spirit of Faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore have I ſpoken, we alſo believe, and therefore ſpeak.* But now to conclude the Obſervations from *Cyprian*, with what he ſays in *Ep.* 58. " When *Daniel* " with his Partners ſtood before *Nebuchadnezzer* they ſaid, " *We are not carefull to anſwer thee in this Matter: Our* " *God whom we ſerve, is able to deliver us out of thine Hand,* " *but if He will not, be it known unto thee, O King, we will* " *not worſhip the Golden Image which thou haſt ſet up.* Here " is the great Vigour of Faith, and in theſe Words, the " unconquer'd *Power of the Holy Spirit ruſhed violently,* " thro' their Mouth; which anſwers to the Word of our " Lord, *Take no Thought what ye ſhall ſay, for it ſhall be* " *given you in that Inſtant, for it is not ye ſhall ſpeak, but* " *the Spirit of my Father that ſpeaketh in you.* He then (ſays " *Cyprian*) has promiſed, that it ſhall be given us in that " Hour, and *from God utter'd*, what therefore can we " ſpeak or anſwer? Nor is it we, who then ſpeak, but " the Spirit of God the Father; who, as *He does not with-* " *draw, nor is ſeparated from thoſe that confeſs him,* ſo, He it " is, that both ſpeaketh and triumpheth in us alſo.

§ 41. All that has appear'd from the Works of St. *Cyprian* being duly conſider'd; no Man can with any Juſtice of Reaſoning doubt, but they infer the Continuance in others, of the ſaid multiplied Communications of the Spirit extraordinary, for ſome Years after his Conqueſt over Death; but, bleſſed be God, we ſtand in no Need to crave the Benefit of the moſt unavoidable and neceſſary Inferences to aſſure to us, the Exiſtence and Agency of the Prophetick Spirit, openly acknowledg'd, unto the full End of the Year 300. after the Birth of our bleſſed *Emanuel*; for, *Arnobius* writing of the laſt Period of that Term, ſays, " that the Devils even then, trembled at the " Name of Chriſt, and withdrew in Horror from thoſe " they poſſeſſed, being vanquiſhed by the Force of a ſu- " perior Authority; and that Chriſt appeared to them

" that

" that loved him, *in Dreams*, not ſuch as are of a vain " kind, but thoſe that are evidently genuin from above; " and this, as St. *Hierom* confirms, was the very Caſe of " *Arnobius* himſelf, who was driven and enforced (from " Idolatry) to the Faith of Chriſt, by Dreams. *Lactan-* " *tius* alſo, and *Julius Firmicus*, are very expreſs and am- " ple touching the ſame Interval of Time, That the " Power of caſting out Devils, (the ſame which was con- " ferr'd on the primary Apoſtles, by our Lord Himſelf, " for an Evidence of his Power, abiding with them) did " ſtill continue to be openly exerciſed, in his Church; " which receiv'd from him, Grace for Grace, or ſome- " what that anſwer'd to every Power, exerciſed by Him- " ſelf, when on Earth."

§ 42. The laſt Words quoted from St, *Cyprian*, that *God does not withdraw, nor is ſeparated from thoſe that confeſs him*, are there apply'd to the Spirit extraordinarily inſpi- ring; concurrent with which, it was an Opinion generally receiv'd among the Writers and Fathers in the Church preceding him, that the Gift of Prophecy in particular, was ever to remain in the Church, for her Comfort, Edi- fication and Direction. Now that Opinion prevailing, un- controll'd and uncondemn'd before *Conſtantine*, is a juſt and reaſonable Preſumption, that tho' in ſome Places the ſame was not apparent and viſible, yet that it was not que- ſtion'd to ſurvive in others; ſo that tho' we have chiefly built the latter Proofs at this Diſtance of Time, upon the Authority of St. *Cyprian*, yet there is abundant Reaſon to conclude, from ſo general a Conſent in that Opinion here mention'd, that there were numerous Inſtances of like kind, in other Countries; for if the publiſh'd Reve- lations of *Cyprian* had not been attended, with ſome Con- temporary Manifeſtations of God elſewhere, it is not con- ceivable how his Reputation could have been ſupported, in that Degree to the laſt, wherein it certainly was, over all the Chriſtian World. But to render what I have ſaid here, a very juſt and reaſonable Preſumption, it ſeems of great Weight, what Mr. *Dodwell's* 4*th Diſſert. on Cypr.* Sect. 22. affirms; "I do not think (ſays he there) that there was " *one Man* before the Emperor *Conſtantine*, who believed, " that the Prophetical Gifts were ceaſed in the Church; " nor of conſequence, could it enter into any one's " Thoughts to enquire for a Reaſon of their Deficience: " But it was after the Time of *Conſtantine*, that the Do- " ctors *firſt began* to look for Reaſons of their ceaſing, tho'

" neither

" neither then did they preſently acknowledge, that thoſe " Gifts were extinct. And in particular, as to *the Gift of* " *Prophecy*, (ſays he elſewhere) Men generally before *Con-* " *ſtantine*, did expect from Scripture Declarations and " Promiſes of the New Teſtament, that it would ever re- " main in the Church. And (ſays he, in Sect. 37.) the " Chriſtians of thoſe Times did determine, touching the " Prophetical Scriptures themſelves, in the obſcure Parts " of them, that they were not any ways certainly to be " underſtood, but by new Revelations of the ſame Spi- " rit which had dictated them at firſt. It was therefore " near the End of the Fourth Century, and about the " Year 400. (ſays the ſame Author) that *Chryſoſtom* affirms " the *Ceſſation of Propheſyings*, raiſing the Dead, the Gift of " Healing, and caſting out of Devils. Nevertheleſs, in the ſame Period, *Epiphanius lib.* ii. *Tom.* 1. *p.* 403. ſays, " Is the Divine Gift of Prophecy ceaſed? Far be it from " us to think ſo, for ſurely in the univerſal Church it is " not." And *Auguſtine* in *Africa*, about the ſame Time, *Confeſ. lib.* viii. *cap.* 12. " writes himſelf to be firſt convert- " ed by a Voice from Heaven, ſaying, *Take up the Book and* " *read, viz.* the Scriptures; and elſewhere, he writes very " *dubiouſly*, whether the miraculous Powers were ceaſed in " the Church or not, becauſe the Separatiſts or Hereticks " claimed to enjoy them ſtill.

§ 43. I confeſs indeed (ſays Mr. *Dodwell*, *Diſſert.* 4. on " *Cyprian*,) that there were, even in the Age of St. *Cyprian*, " Perſons in the Chriſtian Church, who treated Viſions " and Dreams in Ridicule; but what Manner of People " theſe were, his *Ep.* 69. ſhews; *for*, ſays he, *altho' I know* " *that ſome Perſons judge contemptuouſly of Dreams, and eſteem* " *Viſions an idle Whimſie, yet they are ſuch, who rather chooſe to* " *believe any thing, againſt the Miniſtry, than for it.* By " which Words (Mr. *Dodwell* adds) is imply'd, that thoſe " who expreſſed themſelves in that Manner, were ill af- " fected to the Church: And that Perſons of that Kid- " ney ſhould ſo think, is no whit to be wonder'd at; for " in the Time of the Scripture Prophets, there were of " this Sort of Men, whom the *Hebrew* Text calls, *Latſim*, " who, that they might bring all reveal'd Religion into " Contempt, did attempt to do that with Scurrility and " the Snear, with Banter and the Joke, which they never " could do, in any Way of Argument." Now, if we have any Value for the Scripture Repreſentation, we ought to

enquire

enquire into the Character of those who derided all Religion, and who are spoken of therein by the Term *Latsim*. Wherefore, upon Search into *Buxtorf*'s Dictionary, we may find that *Latsim* signifies, a Person who speaks in an *uncouth and ridiculous Manner*, in the Apprehension of those who don't understand him; and is passively taken for an Allusion to the barbarous Way of the ignorant Rabble in a Country, who scoff at the Appearance of Foreigners, for the *Strangeness of their Habit, Behaviour and Language*; the *English* often renders the Word in the Old Testament, Mockers, Scorners, Despisers, and scurrilous Laughers at Things the most sacred and reverend. But as sometimes the Word *Latsim* is apply'd to a Thing, which in the common Acceptation, does but (as above) appear phantastical and ridiculous, tho' in it self it be not so. And thus it occurs in *Isa.* xxvii. 11-13. *Whom shall he teach Knowledge? for with* (Latsim) *STAMMERINGS of Lips, will he speak to this People; but the Word of the Lord was unto them* (in that Manner) *that they might go and fall backward, and be broken and snared, and taken.* Yet the said Text is cited by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 21. and apply'd to the Christian Prophesying in strange Tongues; *With other* (or strange) *Lips will I speak*, &c.

§ 44. Now whether there was any thing in the Manner of speaking by the Spirit of Prophecy in other Tongues, in the Apostolick Time, that might answer to the Word (*Latsim,*) in *Isaiah*, signifying *a STAMMERING and RIDICULOUS BABLING*, I leave to the more Learned to solve; only it may perhaps be not unworthy here of Notice, that *Irenæus, lib.* iii. *cap.* 7. says, "That "the Obscurity and perplexed Stile of the Apostle *Paul*, "frequent in his Epistles, did flow from the *Rapidity of his* "*Utterance*, and thro' *the Violence of the Spirit* that was up-"on him." But to pursue Mr. *Dodwell*'s Remarks on the Age of St. *Cyprian*; "It was true, says he, indeed, that "the *Manner of the Prophets in their Gestures of Body*, was "a little strange, and different from the common Usages "of Men, which it was easie for those that were given to "Buffoonry, to represent the Prophets themselves, as very "ridiculous by; even as *Cyprian* himself had taken No-"tice of, that *Joseph* was in Scorn, by his Brethren, call'd, "*a Dreamer*. That Prophet, who was sent by *Elisha*, to "anoint *Jehu* King of *Israel*, was call'd by the Officers of "the Army, a mad Fellow. Thus in the Apostles Time,

the

" the frequent Cautionary Warnings we have, not to de-
" *ſpiſe Propheſying*, nor to *quench* or extinguiſh the Spirit;
" theſe do ſufficiently imply, how ready and prone Men
" were like to be to that, againſt which there was Need,
" ſo often to warn them. Neither indeed, was there any
" thing better in that very Time of the Apoſtles to be ex-
" pected, ſince even then the Prophets were ſo untractable,
" and ſuch Diſturbers of publick Order, that they ſpake
" many of them together, (*altho' nevertheleſs by the true*
" *Spirit* ;) and the Propheteſſes among Crowds of Men,
" did preach with their Hair all about their Ears, not be-
" coming the Modeſty of the Sex. And when the Pro-
" phets alſo then (*however true*) did exerciſe their Gifts,
" without any Reſpect to publick Edification and Uſe,
" they needed to be reſtrained, leſt they ſhould continue in
" that Practice ; (*tho' on theſe Accounts they were not con-*
" *demn'd for falſe Prophets.*) Wherefore, if Men would ſuf-
" fer themſelves eaſily to tranſgreſs, they never needed
" to look far for a Pretext, when they could judge theſe,
" or ſuch like Things, ſufficient Reaſons to treat the Per-
" ſons of the Prophets with Scorn." Let us obſerve how-
ever, ſuch Irregularities were not inconſiſtent with the true Spirit of Prophecy, as moſt Men in our Days, would be apt on like Occaſions to judge.

§ 45. As to that Subject of Ridicule, the extravagant *Geſtures of Body* uſual, and (by what I can find) poſſibly univerſal on the Prophets ; whoſoever will make what is comely and decent in the Sight of Men, and becoming to the Order requiſite for publick Aſſemblies, rather a Rule for them to judge by, than the full and clear Standard of God's Word, there is no arguing with ſuch, to their own Maſter they ſtand or fall; the antient Prophets were all condemnable upon ſuch like Topicks ; and in like Manner alſo, the Chriſtian Prophet was exceptionable on that Account, as well as the antient ones among the *Jews*: All which has fully appear'd in the Firſt Part of this Treatiſe, and alſo in this Second, and will be yet more ſo, in the Courſe of Argument upon the now immediately enſuing Third Part: For as in this latter we are to treat wholly upon the *Montaniſtical* Inſpir'd, who were *viſibly agitated*, that is, they were *Energumens and Pneumatical*, or apparently affected by a Spirit upon them ; we ſhall here only add, that *Epiphan. lib.* ii. *Tom.* 1. *p.* 409. ſpeaking on this very Subject, ſays, " *It is certain, that both the antient*

" *Pro-*

" *Prophets and Apoſtles all of them did propheſie after the ſame* " *Manner, and not differently the one from the other.*" The Author likewiſe of the *Hiſtory of Montaniſm*, who writes expreſly againſt them, as well as *Epiphanius* there did, ſays, " There was a Liberty of Propheſying or ſpeak- " ing under Inſpiration, allowed in the primitive Church " in general, to as many as were *Pneumatical, (acted by a* " *Spirit)* that is, ſays he, thoſe that were thought to have " receiv'd the Gifts of the Spirit, by *certain viſible Mani-* " *feſtations* thereof, as it evidently appears from the moſt " antient Monuments that we have, and particularly from " the Epiſtles of St. *Paul.*" And now, if the Reader will turn back to the firſt Part hereof, and look again into the Chapter on *Prophecy proper*, he will excuſe me from inſiſt- ing any further here, on this Point; but will permit me to purſue the Report Mr. *Dodwell* gives us, of the Profa- neſs growing up among Chriſtians, in the Days of *Cypri- an*, with reſpect to the extraordinary Ways of the Spirit of God, who notwithſtanding all Deſpite done to Him, waited long; ſtill exiſtent tho' deſpiſed, ſurviving, tho' then ex- ceedingly quenched; as unwilling to depart, altho' long and variouſly grieved.

§ 46. " But if, ſays Mr. *Dodwell*, in the Times of thoſe " Prophets (of the Old and New Teſtament) who gave " forth the moſt aſſured Evidences of their Propheſyings, " there was nevertheleſs ſuch kind of Scoffers; there is " leſs to be wondred at, that the like ſhould be found in " the Days of *Cyprian*, when the *Epicurean* Philoſophy had " obtained the Vogue, which turns all preternatural " Things into Ridicule; it was no Matter with this Sort " of People, whether *the Propheſyings* (intimated hereby " extant) were from the true Spirit or a falſe one, or " whether thoſe who more perfectly underſtood ſuch " Things, did approve them or not. This is what never " came into Queſtion; but the very Mention of the ſuper- " natural, with the Gentlemen of an *Epicurean* Tincture, " was Matter enough to ſerve them for a Jeſt; for, as to " the Reality of the Thing, we find that the moſt Learned " and moſt intelligent Perſons in Spiritual Affairs, who " were Contemporaries with St. *Cyprian*, did acknowledge " the *prophetical Gifts then in the Church*: But as for the " Atheiſtical *Epicurean* Chriſtian, and People of that " Turn, it was always, and is at this Day, their genuine " Faculty, to ſit down content with, and ſettle upon the

" Lees

" Lees of ſome general Syſtems, or projected Suppoſitions
" of their own; and not to trouble their Heads about
" any particular Inſtances ſet before them, no not ſo much,
" as to enquire (any Ways diſtinctly) into them."

§ 47. This is indeed a very melancholy Account; and that there ſhould ever be at all, in the Chriſtian Church, Scoffers at Revelation in general, and Deſpiſers of thoſe Ways of Divine Manifeſtation, upon which all Religion according to the Scriptures, is built; muſt be a Subject of the deepeſt Lamentation, to every faithful Believer in Chriſt: And that the Leaven of ſo nefarious a Poiſon ſhould have tinctured thoſe early Days of *Cyprian*, which were the middle of the Third Century, has ſomething in it, that may well ſtrike us with Aſtoniſhment. But now, to withdraw our ſelves from Reflections that may be more proper elſewhere, and here to go on to purſue the Track of our preſent Subject, which is an Enquiry into Matters, as they were in Fact; we find by the whole Chain of what is paſſed, that the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, the Riches of the Glory of Chriſt in his Church, did apparently decreaſe in the Third Century. Mr. *Dodwell* (as already noted) has more critically fixed that Decreaſe to the Interval between the Years 220. and 250. Which Computation he builds upon the Records of the ſubſiſting Authors in that Age, who make leſs Reports in their Writings, of thoſe extraordinary Gifts, than ſuch who in Time preceded them. After that Space, we have, tis true, ſeveral Particulars of Revelation and Gifts by divers other Perſons; but the main Burden of Proof lies upon the Shoulders of *Cyprian*, who was himſelf a Prophet, and it ſeems had the uſual good Sign of the true, that is, to be the Subject of Deriſion. But the Reflection moſt obvious, and moſt worthy of Remark, touching this Juncture, is, that the Encreaſe of *Epicurean* and Infidel Principles, in all Revelation, and the Decreaſe of the extraordinary Gifts of God revealing, meet together hy this Hiſtorical Collection, much about the ſame Period of Time; for when Mr. *Dodwell* ſays, that *the moſt learned and moſt intelligent Perſons*, did in *Cyprian*'s Time, acknowledge the Prophetical Gifts ſubſiſting, 'tis plain from thence, that there were many, nay, Multitudes of leſs learned and intelligent, that did deny it; and he ſays, thoſe that in the Church derided and ſcoffed at the Authority of Divine Manifeſtations then, did it upon ſnch Principles, whereby all Pro-

Propheſying, the true as well as falſe, ſtood equally, rejected and condemned.

§ 48. As to the introducing of *Phyloſophy*, into the Chriſtian Church, againſt which, the Holy Spirit by the Apoſtles had warned us, in the moſt expreſs Terms, (as has been hinted, in the *Introduction* of this Treatiſe) and eſpecially the *Epicurean*; and how it obtain'd or grew in vogue there, in the Age we are now treating of; we leave to further Enquiry, and more mature Conſideration; but I wiſh, Men would duly reflect upon it, and conſider, whether the Philoſophical Principles deſtructive of Faith, in the extraordinary Manifeſtations of God, which concurr'd with the Decreaſe of the Prophetical Gifts, may not be accounted among the juſt Cauſes of that Decreaſe, by the Righteous Diſpenſation of Divine Judgment? For we know very well, that the Sect of the *Sadducees*, notwithſtanding that they rejected the Prophetical Authority of all the Old Teſtament Scriptures, beſides thoſe of *Moſes*, and held Principles incompatible with the acknowledging of the Spirit of Prophecy, yet for all that, they were a leading Party among the Prieſts; as to thoſe indeed, whom Mr. *Dodwell* mentions, of the leſs Learned and Intelligent, who had imbibed the Principles of the *Epicurean* Philoſophy, with reſpect to the Prophetick Gifts, in *Cyprian*'s Time, we cannot tell whether he means any among the Clergy; but if it were ſo, as it is not impoſſible, their profeſs'd adherence however, to the Inſpiration of the Writings of the Apoſtles, might probably enough ſecure their Intereſt and Reputation too, eſpecially conſidering that a Number of Abettors generally makes good an Argument, be it what it will. Nevertheleſs, the moſt intelligent in Spiritual Things, who believ'd the *Prophetical Gifts* then exiſting in *Cyprian*'s Time, did conſider them, as the Evidence of Chriſt's extraordinary Preſence with his Church, and therefore they did well to acknowledge them. I am perſwaded, that thoſe who now-a-days love the Lord Jeſus in Sincerity, cannot but think, that at what Time ſoever, God, the Father of all, ever did, or ever ſhall ſpeak unto his People by the Spirit of Prophecy, it ought always to be accounted of, as the higheſt Favour poſſible from the Throne of the Heavenly King of his Church, and be ſubmitted to, with a Reverence much greater than that of our bounden Allegiance to an Earthly Prince. Therefore, in Reſpect to ſuch as theſe, and in

Conſequence of the Duty I owe to my tranſcendant Prophet and King, I now proceed to the Third Part of this Treatiſe, wherein perhaps ſome of thoſe Principles, here laſt above-mention'd, to be deſtructive of true Faith, in St. *Cyprian*'s Time, may appear to have generally prevailed, at leaſt, in the Churches of *Aſia*, before it.

THE

THE SPIRIT of PROPHECY DEFENDED, &c.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

Of Controverted PROPHECY, *in the* Second *and* Third Century.

§ 1. IN the first Part of this Treatise, under the Head of *Prophecy proper*, we have shewn at large from the Words of the Scripture Text both of the Old and New Testament, that the very Constituent Denomination of a Prophet, is set forth to us, by Terms, which express a Person *violently moved and actuated by a Spirit*; that is, there was some sort of extraordinary Impressions, visible upon him, in the Circumstances, either of Extacy or Trance, Extravagancy of figurative Signs, and Agitations or Emotions, all of them so very uncommon, that these did afford a moral Assurance to all Observers, that he neither spake, or acted by his own Will, as other Men; but that a superior Agent, did at cer-

tain Times affect him ſo, in the Functions of his Office. Having therefore laid the Foundation of our Faith and Knowledge of the Ways of the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, upon the Records thereof in Holy Writ, as recited in the firſt Part hereof; there is in the Second Part, an evident Concurrence to the ſaid Scripture Definition of Propheſying, obſervable, from the Writings of the moſt celebrated Fathers, in the Second and Third Centuries, and the Report of Moderns, touching thoſe Times. Thus, for Inſtance,

§ 2. In the Epiſtles of *Barnabas* and *Ignatius*, and the Book of *Hermas*, we find a Prophet termed *the Veſſel of the Spirit*, one in whom the Spirit dwelt, and *with which he was filled*, as in *Job* xxxii. 18--20. wherein the Word *VESSEL* is plainly to be underſtood, in the Senſe that St. *Paul* gives it, 1 *Theſ.* iv. 4. *viz.* the *Body*; wherefore *Barnabas* ſays, the Spirit ſo dwelling, open'd the Door of his Houſe or Temple, (the Body,) that is, the Mouth as in *Job*, *I will ſpeak that I may be refreſhed.* And *Hermas* ſays, the Prophetick Spirit was given to dwell *in the Fleſh.* Thus alſo, when we read, that the Antients had the Text of 1 *Cor.* vi. 20. *Glorify, and carry God in your Body*; and we find *Hermas* ſignifying and deſcribing of Prophets, by *their carrying holy Spirits*, and being moved by them. Moreover, when we obſerve that *Ignatius*, ſtiles himſelf *Theophoros*, that is, one *carrying* God, or *moved of* God, and likens the Spirit influencing to living Water *ſpringing up within him*, and ſpeaking (or overflowing) by his Mouth; when alſo he mentions other Prophetical Perſons, to be in the Eſtate of *carrying* Chriſt or under the Condition of *poſſeſſing Chriſt*, and their being *full of God*, and *poſſeſſing the Spirit*; we cannot but conceive, that the Expreſſions uſed by theſe primo-primitive Chriſtian Prophets, do clearly denote ſome viſible Manifeſtations on the Perſon, ſuch as are largely proved from the ſacred Text, *Part.* i. *cap.* 6. under the Third Head, there treated of. Wherefore alſo,

§ 3. In Agreement with the *Trance* prophetical, whereof we have copiouſly treated, in the firſt Part, which is rendred ſometimes *a deep Sleep*, and whereof, various Degrees are there hinted; the Witneſſes of *Ignatius*'s Martyrdom in the Second Part, tell us of many that *fell* into a Slumber, and therein ſaw Viſions. *Tertullian* alſo mentions Propheſying *in Extacy, or in the Spirit*: And after him, *Cyprian* deſcribes

ſcribes a Viſion of his own to be given him, while he was under a Slumber, and not yet quite aſleep; and he ſpeaks of it, as a thing notorious, that the Divine Spirit frequently gave out his publick Admonitions and Reproofs, by Perſons ſpeaking under Extacy. Upon which Paſſage of *Cyprian*'s, the Commentators deliver us their Judgment, that it was uſual with Prophets to be in a Trance. Wherefore, Dr. *Hicks*'s *Enthuſiaſm exorcis'd*, and Mr. *Dodwell on Irenæus*, do ſeveral Times in their treating of Prophecy, during the firſt Chriſtian Ages, mention that of *Rapture* to be a Circumſtance, pertinent to the Prophets. And thence, even from the Notoriety of Fact in this Caſe, it came, that not only *Juſtin Martyr*, but many or moſt of the Antients before *Conſtantine*, believ'd the *Sybils* to be divinely inſpir'd, altho' their Extacies were exceeding great. Furthermore,

§ 4. The Letter of the Church of *Smyrna*, on the Death of *Polycarp*, directed to all Chriſtian Churches, and therein commonly read; does ſtile Chriſt to be (that is, his Spirit) *the Governour of our Bodies*, and deſcribes *Polycarp* in his laſt Speech at the Stake, *looking ſternly round about, with a deep Groan, ſhaking his Hand* at the People, having his Mouth but *half open*, which are all, Actions ſeemingly Prophetical. And Mr. *Dodwell* writing of thoſe Times, ſays, that Propheſyings us'd to be deliver'd with Signs; which is but according to the Manner of the Scripture ones; for the ſame Author (with all others I think) allows, that the Prophetick Spirit poured out under the Goſpel, was the ſame which was in the Antients, and which in purſuance of their Predictions, fell upon the Believers in Chriſt. And on this very Point, of outward viſible Tokens of Prophecy, *Epiphanius* readily grants, that the like Appearances of a Spirit were not different in thoſe of the Old, and the Prophets under the New Teſtament. However, we having more at large, in the Firſt Part, ſpoken of the Harmony in all Circumſtances of the Old and New Teſtament, upon the Head of Prophecy, what is there alledg'd, is laid as the Foundation; and the ſhort Citations here from the Second Part, is but to remind the Reader of the Connexion of this Treatiſe; and therein, of the Conſent of Antiquity, to leave the Definition of Prophecy, upon the Scripture Foot, and in their Judgment to be determined by it. But to proceed in the Recital thereof.

§ 5. Thus then, where *Juſtin* the *Martyr* ſays, that the Prophets were influenc'd by the Spirit, as the Strings of a Harp by a Muſician's Hand, there is a viſible Emotion plainly inferr'd; and when *Athenagoras* likens the impelling Power, moving their Mouths, to a Man ſerving himſelf of an Organick Inſtrument, ſome viſible Circumſtance may well be allowed. Thus alſo the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vienne* ſpeak of their Prophets, under the Character of Men *tranſported with a vehement Emotion*, and *Irenæus* deſcribes the Manner of them to be *phantaſtical*, and on that Account they were the Objects of Scoff to ſome. To the like Effect, that Paſſage in *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, ſeems to be, where he calls Prophecy, an *efficacious* and invigorated ſpeaking, the Word there uſed being properly expreſſive of an *Energumen* or *Perſon appearing poſſeſs'd*. Nor was it in thoſe Ages, taken to carry any harſh Sound, as in the modern, to ſay, that the Chriſtian Prophet ſpake by a *Poſſeſſion*; for what we have already mention'd of *carrying the Spirit*, and *Hermas*'s ſaying, that the Prophets were *joined to Spirits*, implies the ſame. Moreover, *Dyoniſius* Biſhop of *Alexandria*, ſpeaks of the Prophets, as under a Poſſeſſion, where he alledges, that *Novatus* had cauſed the Holy Spirit to *fly out of them*, by the renouncing their Baptiſm, and ſubjoins a Hope of his *returning into them* again. And further, he adds ſomething that was remarkable in their breathing unuſually, which is a Circumſtance that was then allow'd for a Sign of one poſſeſſed; and ſeems included in the Apoſtle's Words of *Groans unutterable*, as above explained. And now, let us alſo recollect ſomething briefly, of what Mr. *Dodwell* reports of theſe Times of the Spirit, in the Chriſtian Church.

§ 6. We read often, ſays he, that when thoſe who preſided in the Church, receiv'd from God a publick Truſt, " the Spirit *fell or leap'd upon them*, as on the Seventy El- " ders; (and how this latter was, we refer to the Comment of the Learned, on that Text in Part I.) " Now the " Spirit was conferr'd on the Baptiz'd in that Manner, " that it *appear'd and ſhew'd it ſelf by ſome outward and ſenſible Sign*, which they, the primitive Chriſtians call'd, *the* " *Manifeſtation of the Spirit*: And ſo open, and affecting " the Senſes of others was this Manifeſtation to them who " beheld it, that the very Infidels or Heathen could not " doubt of that Gift of the Spirit, to ſuch Perſons. Thus

" then

" then, thoſe who were *ſo poſſeſſed by the Spirit*, were right-
" ly call'd Prophets, and *the ruſhing Power* of the Prophe-
" tick Spirit, *falling upon* a Perſon, *drove him* to perform
" all Offices in the Church publickly; ſuch as, Exhorta-
" tion or Preaching, conſecrating the Sacramental Ele-
" ments, and ſinging of Pſalms by the *Poetical Rapture* of
" the Divine Spirit, which took Place as well in the Tone
" of Singing, as in the compoſing of the ſaid Pſalms or
" Hymns." In another Place of the ſame Author, cited in the Second Part, he tells us, " that the Geſtures of Bo-
" dy (cauſed by the Spirit) on the Prophets, was very odd,
" and that their Speech was repreſented by the Prophane,
" and derided, as a Stammering, or a ſtrange Sort of Ut-
" terance; and that many Irregularities attended, in the
" Manner of their Propheſying, if human Reaſoning about
" Order and Regularity, might be Judge."

§ 7. But as to the Conſent of Antiquity, with the Scripture Definition of Prophets and Prophecy, by Terms expreſſing ſome viſible outward Appearances thereof; the ſame is further declared, by the ſolemn Appeals of *Juſtin Martyr* and *Origen*, urging the *Jews to come and ſee* the Exertions of the Spirit of Prophecy among Chriſtians, in their Days. For, thoſe Appeals made to the *Jews*, do loudly evince, that the Propheſyings under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, were in the Manner of them the very ſame, and no Ways differing from the Circumſtances of Prophets under the Law; becauſe, had they been of a different kind, the *Jews* were not capable of being convinced by the Sight of them; whereas, on the contrary, the Challengers knew, and do even argue, that there was ſomething open to Ocular Demonſtration, that ſhew'd the like Signs of Prophecy, with thoſe recorded in the Old Teſtament. Wherefore, I ſhall add no more in this Recital, from the Second Part, on this Head, than that *Theophilus* and *Cyprian*, after the Time of *Origen*, do continue to deſcribe to us, Spiritual or Prophetical Men, by the Circumſtances of *carrying* or being *carried by* the Spirit, and their ſpeaking under an Influence, expreſſed by *the Power of the Holy Spirit ruſhing violently thro' their Mouth*; which are Terms alſo, that cannot be well filled up, without ſome outward Evidences thereof.

§ 8. I would not detain the Reader needleſly, by the Length of this Recital; but in what has been ſaid already, the

the Incumbence of the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, being ſometimes deſcribed therein by Words that intimate a permanent Abode thereof, on the Perſon; leſt therefore we ſhould confound it with the common Habit of Grace, or the new Creation, inwardly wrought, and ſo make it to diſagree with the temporary Operations forecited, of that Spirit, in the Act of Propheſying; I muſt here neceſſarily obſerve, that to anſwer thoſe Expreſſions, there may be poſſibly, ſome Sort of ſecret Intimations to the Prophet himſelf more abundantly, and to others alſo, of the Spirit Prophetick frequently and often affecting him, altho' that Agent did powerfully move him but rarely, to any Utterance. But it ſuffices in this Argument, that without open and outward Manifeſtations, in ſome kind or other, evidencing a ſupernatural Agency, even diſtinguiſhable from a meer internal Sanctification; we have ſhew'd that neither from the Words of the ſacred Text, or the Teſtimony of the antient Church of Chriſtians, is there a ſufficient Warrant, for any Man to think himſelf to enjoy the Gift of Prophecy, that is, of Preaching by the Spirit, or for others to eſteem ſo of him.

§ 9. Thus the Second Part having largely made appear, the Conſent of Chriſtian Churches at the firſt, to the Scripture Teſtimonies of the ſuperior Power, viſibly operating on the Prophet; and having here recited that Matter ſomewhat more amply, that the modern Opinion of Prophecy under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, as if *it had been without thoſe exterior Manifeſtations*, might ſtand reproved by the Declarations of the primitive Simplicity of Chriſtian Ages. I ſhall now briefly recollect alſo, from the ſame Authorities, what were the Functions of the Spirit Prophetick, for the publick Admonition, Comfort and Edification of the Faithful, after that He, the Holy Spirit of Prophecy had ſowed and planted every where the Word and Doctrine of the Truth in Jeſus, and laid the Foundation of Churches, by himſelf alone propagated and framed. For, it is evident beyond Queſtion, that the Converſion of *Jews* and *Heathen*, was primarily due, and due only to Prophetick Preaching, as appears by many Paſſages in the Hiſtory of *Euſebius*.

§ 10. Men are willing in our Days, to indulge themſelves in the Opinion, that from the very firſt Plantation of Goſpel Churches, thoſe Communities of Chriſtians were conſtituted

ſtituted in their Direction, and exerciſed in their Worſhip, juſt ſo and no otherwiſe, than they are at this very Day among us. Nevertheleſs, it appears plainly, that Things were very much otherwiſe; for inſtead of ſtated Paſtors, who are now alone allowed to ſpeak for publick Inſtruction, we find in theſe primitive Churches, that not only ſome of all Ranks, did in their Aſſemblies preach by Inſpiration, but even of the moſt abject and contemptible among the People, Women and Children did propheſie without Reſtraint. It appears moreover, that there being viſible Evidences of the Spirit, actuating or moving them in doing ſo, the Trial of that Spirit was not by any who had not the extraordinary Gifts; but the Judgment in ſuch Caſe, was determined by the Spirit in others: Nay, and the ſtated Paſtors themſelves were elected and ſet apart for the Miniſtry, by Appointment and Deſignation of the Spirit in the Prophets, and the Eminency in Gifts extraordinary, (eſpecially that of diſcerning Spirits angelical and human) is repreſented as the chief Diſtinction of Men ſet over the Flock: For, whilſt the Spiritual Gifts remained, there could be no one uninſpir'd (ſays *Mr. Dodwell*) ſet over the Prophets, to preſcribe to them. Under this Oeconomy and Conſtitution of the Church, the Holy Spirit preſided, guided and directed, by immediate Revelations, to whomſoever He pleaſed, even external Things relating to the Church. But among the gifted or Prophetical Perſons, there were ſome ſo remarkably graced, as *Melito* Biſhop of *Sardis*, in particular, that they are ſaid to have receiv'd Divine Directions, touching all Things of Moment. And there was ſometimes a Communication of the Spiritual Gifts to others, as is hinted in the Caſe of *Ignatius*, and frequently by the laying on of Hands.

§ 11. I am here repeating only ſome few of the Reports touching the Times of the Spirit, and his Conduct in the Church, that are at large given us by the Learned, as exemplified in the Second Part; among which we find, that the Diſcernment of Spirits is allowed to have kept all Errors from venting themſelves: And in this Point it is remarkable, that the Errors which did ariſe, during the Superintendency of the Spirit, in the Chriſtian Churches, neither did ſpread ſo much, nor continue ſo long as they did, after the Ceſſation of that extraordinary Guide, in all Truth. And this deſerves to be more heedfully regarded now, becauſe Men have univerſally imbibed a Noti-

on,

on, that every Diſpenſation of the Spirit, muſt neceſſarily draw along with it, the Conſequence of Error uncontrollable. And becauſe any Propheſying or Preaching by the Spirit, is thought now inconſiſtent with the eſſential Conſtituents denominating a Church, I cannot but remind the Reader of the quite contrary Definition thereof, in the primitive Ages, *viz. Where the Spirit extraordinary was, there was a Church*, and no where elſe properly, under an Apoſtolical Conſtitution.

§ 12. The Infliction of, and abſolving from Cenſures, upon cloſe Hypocrites and open Offenders, and the Correction of diſorderly Perſons in general, was (for any thing appears) wholly under the Direction of the Spirit, whoſe Office (by our Lord's Appointment) was to be the Reprover; and the Declaration of ſuch Reproofs or Cenſures, was generally followed with Strokes immediate, of his all powerful Hand, upon the ſtubborn and contumacious. But for the ordinary Functions of thoſe who were ſpiritual, or Prophetical, in Church Aſſemblies, it ſeems, that the ſinging of Hymns and Spiritual Songs, and the conſecrating of the Sacramental Elements, were by the great Comforter inſtantaniouſly directed, and univerſally performed by the Prophets. Preaching it ſelf, was in thoſe Times expreſſed uſually by the Word παρακλησεις, ſignifying equally *comforting or Exhortation:* And as this was generally alſo performed by the Prophets, it clearly ſhews us, how the firſt Chriſtians underſtood the Promiſe of our Saviour, to ſend us the Holy Ghoſt for our Comforter. Wherefore, the Prophetical Gifts of Knowledge and Exhortation, did conſiſt in opening, interpreting, teaching and applying (often perſonally to the Hearts of Men) the Scriptures. And ſurely, ſays Mr. *Dodwell, the loweſt Degree of true Prophecy, is to be preferr'd, for Interpretation of Scripture, before the moſt exquiſite Reaſonings of Men, upon it; and the primitive Chriſtians generally thought, that many Parts of Scripture were not poſſible to be explained, but by him who dictated them at firſt.* Even as touching human Laws, wherein ſoever they admit various Opinions, only the ſame Power that made them, is allowed to fix the Senſe concluſively.

§ 13. THUS FARR, what is repreſented in the Second Part, from the Majority of Writers in the Second and Third Centuries, ſurviving to us at this Diſtance of Time (upon whoſe Report we muſt now neceſſarily depend)

pend) may warrantably be thence concluded, for the Senſe of *the Church in general*, touching the Manner and Functions of the Spirit of Prophecy, in thoſe Ages exiſtent. Nevertheleſs, even from the Death of the primary Apoſtles, unto the Time of *Conſtantine*, there was in the Chriſtian Church, a Sort of Men, who withſtood the Spirit, and deſpiſed Propheſyings; which the Holy Ghoſt foreſeeing, did *therefore leave* (ſays Mr. *Dodwell) repeated Admonitions againſt quenching and grieving of the Spirit*, that the true *Iſrael* of God might benefit themſelves thereby, and not tempt and provoke Chriſt, by Unbelief and Murmurs againſt Him, as the *Hebrews* had done in the Wilderneſs. We are not therefore, to be ſurpriz'd and amaz'd at any thing of that kind, which will be found in the Sequel of this Treatiſe; and the rather, becauſe it appears from the New Teſtament, that there were many Oppoſers to the very Apoſtles themſelves, which is ſo manifeſt, that I may well be excuſed, from inſiſting on the Proof thereof here; and eſpecially becauſe our preſent Subject is, to give an Account of the Ages, which ſucceeded to theirs. However, before we proceed to that Account,

§ 14. It is worthy our Obſervation, that what we render 2 *Theſ.* ii. 3. *falling away*, and in 1 *Tim.* iv. 1. *departing from* the Faith, is expreſſed in the *Greek* by, *Apoſtacy*. Upon which Words Mr. *Mede's* Apoſtacy of the latter Times, does accquaint us, that *Apoſtacy*, having Reference to a Sovereignity or Lordſhip, does betoken a withdrawing of Subjection and Service therefrom; and that when this Word, is applied to the Church in a Reference to God, it ſignifies (ſays he) a ſpiritual Revolt from God, or Rebellion againſt Divine Majeſty: Conſequently therefore, the Apoſtacy mention'd, 2 *Theſ.* ii. 3. means a Breach of Allegiance and Faith given unto Chriſt, by the Church; which Interpretation of the Word, the ſame great Author confirms, by alledging that the *Hebrew* Word, which we render in the Old Teſtament by that of *Rebellion*, is there, by the 70 *Greek*, render'd αποστασια, Apoſtacy; ſo that the New Teſtament borrowing thence the ſaid Word, we are to underſtand, that the Apoſtacy here cited in St. *Paul's* Epiſtles, carries the ſame Meaning with Rebellion, expreſſed in the Prophets of the Old Teſtament. Accordingly therefore, this ſpiritual Revolt and Rebellion, fixed by St. *Paul* on the Chriſtian Church may well be underſtood, by the Word Apoſtacy, to bear the ſame Senſe, which the

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ſame Word does in the Old Teſtament. And there we find it applied, to the rejecting and diſobeying the Word of the Sovereign Lord of his Church, by the Prophets; as in *Neh.* ix. 26. where the *Levites* make a Confeſſion, ſaying in Reſpect to their Predeceſſors, *they rebelled againſt thee*, and ſlew thy Prophets, which the *Greek* reads, *they apoſtatized from thee.* Thus alſo is it, in *Dan.* ix. 9, 10. *we have rebelled againſt Him*, neither have we obeyed the Voice of the Lord our God, by his Servants the Prophets; in which Text again the *Greek* renders it *we have apoſtatized*, &c. As alſo in *Num.* xiv. 9. where *Joſhua* ſaid, *rebel not ye againſt the Lord*, the *Greek* tranſlates, *be not ye Apoſtates.*

§ 15. Concerning this Apoſtacy then, or Rebellion, which St. *Paul* mentions, that it ſhould ariſe in the Chriſtian Church, it is certain, he ſpeaks of it, as then in ſome ſort preſent, and which did then already work; he ſays alſo, that he who withheld or hindered it from prevailing, was notoriouſly at the ſame time known among Chriſtians, and ſhould let, until he were taken, εκ μεσου, *from among*, or out of the midſt of them, 2 *Theſ.* ii. 7. Therefore, touching what occurs in the next Verſe, which by the common *Greek* Teſtament, is, *whom the Lord ſhall conſume*, αναλωσει, it is very remarkable, that Dr. *Mills* gives Twenty one Authorities, from the moſt eſteem'd Manuſcripts, and moſt antient Fathers, which read the Text ανελει, *whom the Lord doth conſume*, or pull down. Which latter Senſe, agrees well with the divers Notices we have, of *Oppoſition* in the very Chriſtian Church, to the chief Apoſtles, from the falſe Apoſtles, the many Antichriſts, the Boaſters of themſelves as *Diotrephes*, and from ſeveral other Circumſtances of like Import, in the Epiſtles Apoſtolical. Wherefore, he who in the Church or among Chriſtians, did with-hold the Myſtery of Iniquity from prevailing, and did then ſuppreſs the Growth of it, was (as we conceive) the mighty Power of Prophecy, call'd in that Context, *the Spirit of his Mouth.* However, this we may be ſure of, that the Root of the Apoſtacy (prefigured ſay ſome, by the Treachery of *Judas*) was coeval with the Apoſtles themſelves; and if we underſtand the Word *Apoſtacy*, with Agreement to the Senſe above-cited, which it bears in the Old Teſtament, *viz.* an Oppoſition to the Word of the Lord Prophetical; then, the Preſence and Abode of Chriſt with his Church, being thus conſtrued, it follows, that every Thing that oppoſed the Authority of his

his Vicegerent, the Lord, the Spirit, was properly Anti-Chriſtianiſm, Apoſtacy or Rebellion.

§ 16. Having made this Digreſſion, to explain that the word Apoſtacy, may well be taken to mean, a Contempt and Rejection of the Spirit of Prophecy, the Teſtimony of Jeſus; and that the Root of it began in the very Age of the Apoſtles, we now proceed to ſhew, that it ſhot forth abundantly more after their Deceaſe. For, *Clemens* in his Epiſtle ſoon after, ſpeaks at large of a *Sedition* in the Church of *Corinth*, againſt their Prophetical Elders, fomented by ſome, who were lifted up in the Pride of their own Reaſon, and boaſting of their Oratory. *Ignatius* alſo about the ſame time, found himſelf obliged to vindicate his Innocence, with the Solemnity of an Oath, againſt the Surmiſes and Scurrility of ſome, touching ſomewhat in his publick Propheſying. *Juſtin Martyr*, in the Diſcourſe mention'd in our Introduction, whilſt he Labours to ſupport the Authority of the WORD revealing, tells us of Chriſtians, who denied the Reſurrection of the Body, by mixing a great deal of Sophiſtry, and blending ſome few Texts of Scripture with their Philoſophy. After him, *Irenæus* tells us, that the Prophetical Function in his Days was ſcoffed at by ſome, as phantaſtical, and that *there was Men who endeavour'd to drive the Grace of Prophecy out of the Church.*

§ 17. The abovemention'd Reports, of the Contempt and Deſpite done to the Spirit of Prophecy, concern the Second Century; and in the Third, we have an anonimous Author of the Martyrology of *Perpetua*, expoſtulating with his Age, touching the decay of Faith, in the Prophetick Teſtimony then ſurviving; *Clemens* of *Alexandria* mentions Prophets, who then hid themſelves in ſolitary Retirement, ſo that he had great deal of Trouble to find out one, whom he ſought for. To the ſame effect, Mr. *Dodwell* informs us, that upon emergent Occaſions, there was ſome urgent Methods uſed, to draw the Prophets into the publick Aſſemblies, that the Church might thereby profit herſelf, of the extraordinary Preſence of God with her. *Origen* intimates, that thoſe who in his time were faithful in declaring what they ſaw, and heard of the Spirit of Prophecy extant, metwith ſome Inconveniences for doing it. And *Cyprian* takes notice of Men, who ſcoffed at Revelations given in his Days; upon which latter Declaration, Mr. *Dodwell* ſays, that the ſame was

not

not at all to be wondred at, becauſe the *Epicurean* Philoſophy had then obtained the Vogue, which turns all preternatural Things into Ridicule. Wherefore, the Learned and leading Part of Men being ſo corrupted, and turned away from the Simplicity of the Goſpel, there can be no Queſtion, but the Apoſtolick Canon, *not to deſpiſe Propheſyings*, was in this Manner ſuperſeded: And as to our dread Sovereign's Commination, *Mat.* xii. 36. *But I ſay unto you, that every idle Word* which Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an Account thereof in the Day of Judgment; the Sophiſters a-la-mode, found out ſome Criticiſm doubtleſs, to make the Text, refer to any thing elſe whatſoever, but that, which our Maſter affixed it to, that is, the ſpeaking a Word againſt the Holy Spirit.

§ 18. As to theſe latter Deſpiters of the Spirit, in St. *Cyprian*'s Time, who ſet themſelves down in the Seat of the Scornful, they ſeem to have attained to the Eſtate of a ſeered Conſcience, in regard to the Reverence due to God revealing. So that, when the Lord cometh to execute Judgment upon thoſe who have ſpoken hard Things againſt Him, *Jude* 15. and that the Expoſtulation of the Judge be, *Your Words have been ſtout againſt me*, that ſort of Perſons are likely to anſwer, as in *Mal.* iii. 13. *What have we ſpoken ſo much againſt thee?* Wherefore, not to plead here, with that Race of primitive Deiſtical Prophaners of ſacred Things, the moſt melancholy Circumſtance of that Age was, that ſuch ridiculing af all ſupernatural Things, was grown into Faſhion, and made up the common Complexion of the Time; for, thus much is clearly intimated to us, by the Words of Mr. *Dodwell*, ſaying, that only thoſe who were of *the moſt perfectly inſtructed in Spiritual Matters, the moſt learned and moſt intelligent therein*, did then acknowledge the Prophetical Gifts to be exiſting, at that Juncture. Upon which Account, of the general prevailing Contempt of Prophecy in *Cyprian*'s Days, we muſt for diſcovering the Growth of ſuch ſpreading Contagion in the Principles of Apoſtacy, look back higher towards the Source of them, and carry our Retroſpect again to the Second Century.

§ 19. We have heard by the Report of Dr. *Whitby*, a Paſſage from ſome of the Works of *Irenæus* Biſhop of *Lyons* who lived at the latter End of the Second Century, that whilſt the extraordinary Gifts abounded in his Church, and in all the Churches, within his Knowledge and View, *there*

there was however (to his Lamentation) *ſome Men, who endeavoured to repell the Grace of Prophecy from the Church.* Now, if we conſider that in *Phrygia* (a Country at the utmoſt Diſtance from him) the Condemnation of *Montanus* and others, for Propheſying by an evil Spirit, was at the ſame Time under Examination and Debate, all over the Chriſtian World; it is not impoſſible, but that *Irenæus* might in that Paſſage, have reſpect to the Sentence paſſed in *Phrygia*. Nay, it ſeems alſo highly probable, becauſe in the Epiſtle written at the very ſame Time by the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vienne*, to the Biſhop of *Rome* (cited by *Euſeb. lib.* v. *cap.* 1.) concerning the *Phrygian* Prophets; for, according to the Judgment of Biſhop *Pierſon*, and others learned in Antiquity, they therein interceeded with the Biſhop of *Rome*, to uſe his Intereſt, in Behalf of the ſaid Prophets, and to get the Sentence againſt them reverſed. And ſuppoſing it to be ſo, if we conſider, that the Churches of *France* thus eſpouſing the Cauſe of *Montanus*, were plentifully then endowed with the Prophetick Gifts, we cannot well conceive that they ſhould do ſo, without the Guidance and Direction of the Spirit of Prophecy among them. Wherefore, it is of exceeding Moment, to have this Affair candidly and impartially enquired into.

§ 20. The Spirit of Prophecy, being in the primitive Ages, eſteem'd as the Preſence of Chriſt with his Church, eſpouſed by Covenant, and owing Allegiance, to Him; if the Churches of *Aſia*, which condemn'd *Montanus* and the reſt, for Propheſying by an evil Spirit, did the ſame upon Principles injurious to the Holy Ghoſt, whoſe Office was to teſtify of Chriſt; then the Spirit of Prophecy, the Teſtimony of Jeſus, was in the moſt heinous Manner poſſible, deſpiſed, grieved, and done Deſpite to; nay, altho' the Sentence paſſed againſt *Montanus*, be granted for juſt and rightful, with reſpect to him perſonally. Becauſe, in this Point, the Caſe was not concerning private and particular Perſons, ridiculing the ſacred Things of the Spirit, but the Sentence was paſſed, upon the Reſolves of ſeveral Synodical Aſſemblies of the Clergy, and under the Form thereof, whatever Number thoſe Aſſemblies did conſiſt of, few or more. The Subject therefore, of this Part of our Treatiſe, being to ſearch after the Evidences of *Oppoſition* in the Church to the Propherick Spirit, as in the Second Part it was, to exhibit Proofs from the Second and Third Centuries, of the Honour and Eſteem paid to it; we are not

herein chiefly concerned to vindicate any Persons, that went under the Name of *Montanists*, but diligently to examine the Principles advanced, touching the Spirit of Prophecy in general, whether misapplied or not, upon the temporary Occasion.

§ 21. For, suppose that the Spirit in *Montanus*, and others then, was an evil one, and so far the Sentence passed against them were warrantable; yet if upon that Occasion, Principles were advanced and established, under the Name and Authority of the uninspir'd Clergy, which are found anti-sciptural; those Principles being equally applicable to the Spirit in the true Prophets at any Time, will sufficiently evince, that the open falling away, or Apostacy in the Church, from her Allegiance due to the Spirit of Christ, may rightly be applicable to those Councils which did first attempt to authorize such Tenets of Revolt and Rebellion against their Sovereign. In this Matter, we could wish indeed, for a clear and distinct Account of Things; but since the Synods herein to be consider'd, are universally allowed to have been the very first Assemblies of the Clergy, in that Sort, next after the Date of the Scripture Record, we must be content with the imperfect Relations, which are yet subsisting of them, and argue upon the Foot only, of what does still subsist, whereof we shall now enter upon an Enquiry into.

§ 22. In a Matter of this Consequence then, that the Reader may first have the Case duly stated, before we go about to have the Merits of it minutely examined, we shall offer all that is in our Power, by exhibiting to him here, two somewhat differing Representations thereof, by Persons of some Eminence in Learning, now both living (for ought I know;) the one a Foreigner, the other of our own Country. As to the latter of these, in the Year 1709. there was a Book publish'd, Entitled, *An Historical Account of Montanism*; the Author whereof thought fit not to prefix his Name; but Dr. *George Hicks*, a Person well acquainted with the Ecclesiastical History of primitive Times, printed it in one Volume, with a Tract of his own, called *the Spirit of Enthusiasm exorcis'd*; and in an Epistle Dedicatory, recommends the former, as projected by himself, and finished to his Satisfaction by the anonimous Author, even beyond what he could have done it himself; and he tells us of it, that the same is such a Digestion of that Part of

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Antiquity, as he thinks, was never done before. Upon which Declaration of a Perſon, eminently verſed in the Antiquities of the Chriſtian Church, who undertakes to anſwer for the Hiſtory of *Montaniſm*, as written by himſelf, we do here take it for granted, to be the moſt compleat Account of that Matter hitherto extant. Wherefore, and becauſe the Writer hereof, has never read any one Tract of the Ancients entirely, except *Euſebius*, that can aſſiſt him to ſpeak poſitively any thing either good or bad, of the *Montaniſts*; he muſt and does, as to Matter of Fact touching them, fully depend upon the above-mention'd Hiſtorical Account, with the Foreigner's here ſubjoined. And becauſe Dr. *Hicks* has taken the former upon himſelf, and bound it up together with the Fourth Edition of his own above-ſaid Tract, they will be hereunder quoted jointly, as concurring both in their Deſign and Subject; I beg the Reader therefore to obſerve, that where he reads what is diſtinguiſhed from my own proper Words, either for or againſt the *Montaniſts*, that the ſame is drawn from this Author, except I particularly name another.

§ 23. " It pleas'd God (ſays he) to grant to his Church, " in purſuance of the Promiſe given her thro' his beloved " Son, many extraordinary Graces, and among the reſt, " in particular, the Gift of *Propheſying*, as taken in the " ſtricteſt Senſe of the Word: Wherefore, in the primi- " tive Church, at the Time of the beginning of this Ac- " count of *Montaniſm*, that is, about *Anno Chriſti*, 170. " there was Liberty of propheſying, or ſpeaking under In- " ſpiration, allow'd in general to as many, as were called " *Spiritual*; that is, ſuch who by certain viſible *Manifeſta-* " *tions* thereof, were thought to have receiv'd the Gifts of " the Spirit; as it evidently appears, from the moſt antient " Monuments we have, and particularly from the Epiſtles " of St. *Paul*. The End of this Liberty was, the Edifica- " tion of all the Members of the Church, according to " the particular Gift of each one; and as there was an ex- " preſs Command given to try the Spirits, there was alſo a " *miraculous Power*, conveyed to certain Perſons, in Order " to the trying them accordingly; for there were many " Spirits in thoſe early Days, that had the cunning ſo to " transform themſelves into the Spirit of Chriſt, as it was " *impoſſible for any without an extraordinary Aſſiſtance*, to diſ- " cover them; therefore it was thought moſt proper, by " the Divine Wiſdom, that He who is the Head of the

" Church, ſhould by his own Spirit *extraordinarily*, aſſiſt " his Body, in the Diſcovery of all ſuch Counterfeits, by " the Gift of *diſcerning Spirits*. For there was an extreme " Difficulty to diſcern the falſe from the true Spirit of " Prophecy, becauſe there were not many that were *capa-* " *ble Judges* (ſuch as) upon whom the Spirit of Wiſdom " and *Diſcernment* reſted.

§ 24. In theſe Days, the Tares were inſenſibly ſown in " the Field of the Church, under the Cloak of Zeal, and " Shew of the utmoſt Mortification and Sanctity, ſo that " the Diſeaſe ſpread it ſelf moſt ſwiftly and infected great " Numbers; even among Perſons of unqueſtion'd Probity, " and ſome alſo of Learning, Honour and Fortune, and " even ſome in the higheſt Dignities in the Church, " who could hardly be ſuppoſed to have any ſelfiſh or ill " Deſign; not only was it thus in *Aſia*, but in the Churches " of *Africa* and *Europe* alſo; for there were vaſt Numbers " who called themſelves all, by the one common Name of " πνευματικοι, or *the Inſpir'd*, as thoſe who had receiv'd " the Holy Spirit, and they all with one Accord conſented, " to deny and quit every Name, ſuch as diſtinguiſhed them " by their Leaders; whilſt their Oppoſers did in Con- " tempt fix upon them, divers Names deriv'd from their " Leaders, ſuch as *Montaniſts*, *Alcibiadiſts*, *Proclians*, *Æſ-* " *chiniſts*, *Priſcilliſts*, *Lucians*, *Tertullianiſts*, *Artemoniſts*, and " the like, and alſo ſome other Names, coined from ſome " odd Appearance, or particular Action of theirs: How- " ever, by aſſuming to themſelves the Title of *the Inſpir'd*, " they did not thereby pretend to condemn others, ſince " there were in the Days of the Apoſtles, many Baptiz'd " Chriſtians, who had not receiv'd the Spirit Prophetical, " and ſo there might be ſtill; they indeed reflected on " other Chriſtians, as having left their firſt Love, and ſo " fallen from the Spirit of Chriſtianity into the Spirit of " the World; and that in Conſequence of this their Luke- " warmneſs, and the Remiſneſs of their Diſcipline, God " had withdrawn from them the *Powers* of the Heavenly " World, and all the *greater Viſitations of his Spirit*, which " had been in the Age before them, ſo eminently diffuſed " in the Church. Whilſt theſe Things hapned, it was " indeed the *Time of the Spirit*, and before the extraordi- " nary Gifts thereof (by which they might be try'd) ceaſed " in the Church, and whilſt they took upon themſelves the " Character of *Inſpir'd*, πνευματικοι, they ſtood only di-

" ſtinguiſhed

" ſtinguiſhed from others, as ψυχικοι, *ſouliſh*, or meerly " rational; that is, they were oppoſed to, as many as *ha-* " *ving not the Spirit*, yet would ſeparate themſelves, from " thoſe who really *had the Spirit*, according to *Jude* 19. " This is a Matter of the utmoſt Notoriety, that the Title " they claimed of *Spiritual*, was on the ſaid Foundation.

§ 25. In the Manner of their publick Propheſyings, their " Agitations were ſuppoſed to be involuntary; and one of " the main Symptoms of that Spirit which enter'd into " their Bodies, in their Prophetick Fits, was that it made " them ſwell and heave in their Breaſts, after a ſtrange " Manner; and they conſtantly averr'd, as well, when un- " der the Operation of the ſaid Spirit, as when out of it, " that the Organs of their Bodies were by it over-ruled, " and their Tongues conſtrained to utter what they did, " without their own Foreknowledge of the Matter; which " Spirit, delivering its Oracles by the Mouths of theſe " pretended Prophets and Propheteſſes, gave it ſelf out to " be no other than the *Paracleet* (the Comforter) the very " Eternal Spirit of God: And it is obſervable, that this " Spirit did nearly imitate moſt, if not all, the Properties " of the true Divine Spirit; for the Manner of it was, " to preſs much Holineſs, and rebuke Vice openly and " powerfully; and it reſembled much the Spirit of God, " in producing according to the Warnings and Exhortati- " ons by the Mouths of his Inſpir'd, ſuch outward Fruits, " as were nearly like to thoſe that are in Scripture call'd " *the Fruits of the Spirit*, in Oppoſition to the *Works of* " *the Fleſh*; and that this Spirit might ſeem to be a Diſ- " cerner of the Secrets of the Heart, as well as an utter " Enemy to all Iniquity, he would publickly in their Aſ- " ſemblies for Propheſying, make one or other of the *In-* " *ſpir'd*, reprove perſonally ſome that were there preſent, " for ſuch Faults of theirs as were not known. And the " Spirit which agitated them, and ſpoke thro' them, did " under theſe Inſpirations, not only call aloud to Repen- " tance, and give forth a great Number of good Moralities, " and Exhortations to Holineſs and Strictneſs of Life; " but moſt vigorouſly preſſed a Reformation, both of Diſ- " cipline and Manners in the Church, thereby reflecting " upon others, as too looſe in both.

§ 26. " There was very little of Order or Regularity " in their Aſſemblies; for whomſoever the Agitations ſeiz-

" ed, whether Man or Woman, whether young or old, " the Perſon ſo agitated was not to be reſtrained; and " to ſtop the Mouth of him or her, that was ſpeaking " under ſuch Agitations, was accounted no leſs, than the " *quenching the Spirit*, and *forbidding to propheſy*; the Au- " thority of the Biſhop himſelf, if preſent, being held by " them not ſufficient to lay an Interdict in this Caſe. As " they fell into Agitations, or into Extacies, there was " the greateſt Attention and Earneſtneſs, that was poſſible, " in thoſe that waited about them; and all that was " then by them utter'd, was ſpoken as if they had been the " very Mouth of the Divine Spirit: So ſoon therefore, as " the Signs began to appear upon them, the reſt prepared " to give Ear unto them, as unto the Oracles of God. " What was ſo order'd, was obeyed; and they ſcrupled " not to think, that theſe had more Power and Authority " than the Prieſts and Biſhops. And thus was the Chri- " ſtian Prieſthood undermined, by theſe Pretenders to an " extraordinary and unlimited Miſſion; by the Means of " which Spirit, they eſtabliſhed certain Rules and Orders " among themſelves; but in their Aſſemblies for Divine " Worſhip, they conformed themſelves to the general " Practice among other Chriſtians, in Matters not other- " ways determined by that Spirit which had the Guidance " of them. In the Places appointed for publick Divine " Service, whether on the Lord's Day or other Days, they " continued a long while at their Prayers, and waited for " the Deſcent of the Spirit, to fill thoſe that were ſet apart, " to miniſter in holy Things. They read the Books of " the Old Teſtament, when they were met together, no " leſs than the New; and they were zealous above moſt, " for the Traditions of the Chriſtian Elders, and would " not ſeem to innovate in old Cuſtoms: And thus in their " Aſſemblies, they had the Holy Scriptures read among " them, as other Chriſtians, but they ſuper-added the read- " ing of their own Inſpirations."

§ 27, This being the general Account given of the *Inſpir'd*, *Pneumatical*, or *Prophet* in thoſe Days, the firſt a- mong them under the Definition above deſcribed, that was ever queſtion'd and condemn'd by Perſons uninſpir'd in the Chriſtian Church, was one *Montanus*, about the Year 180. not that the reſt that were ſpread all over the Chriſtian World did derive from him, or any other Perſon, but meerly from the Prophetick Spirit that ruled in them.

But

But seeing he was the first under an irreproachable Character as to Doctrine, and in respect to Morality, that spake evidently by a Spirit upon him, and was known however to have a Sentence pass upon him, as possessed by an evil Spirit; after Ages did fix upon the Prophetical or inspir'd Teachers, the Name of *Montanists*: And this I must beg Leave at present to suppose, till the Merits of the Cause be minutely examined and discuss'd, and the Reasons produced upon it, are at large heard. In the mean Time, for the more distinct Apprehension of Things, we shall pursue the Report of the Author of this History, as well touching particular Persons, as already we have done, touching *the inspir'd, or Christian Prophets* in general; and for the reason just now alledg'd, we are to begin with the Account given us of *Montanus* himself. "There is great Variety of "Opinions, says the Historian, about the Time, when "*Montanus* did first appear, to work Signs and Miracles; "either by the Operation of God, as the *Annalist* supposes "he might at the first, or else by that of the Devil transformed; and that in such a Manner, as no-body was "able to discern, because both his Life and Doctrine "were holy and blameless in all Appearance. The Time "when it began to be doubted, concerning the Spirit "which operated in him, and moved him after an extraordinary Manner, whether it were a good or an evil "One, is very uncertain, but seems only included to have "been, between the Years of Christ, 150. and 170. However so it was, that the Sentiments of those sound in the "Faith, or the Christians in general, were much divided "in their Judgments. None of all the Antients was more "express than he, in the Mystery of the Incarnation, or "seem'd more to honour the Person of Christ, and extoll his Merits: Now, all the antient Hereticks erred "generally as to this, from the Truth, he only was clear "as to this Point, preaching up Repentance and Faith, in "the Name of the Name of the Lord Jesus alone, as the "one Mediator between God and Man. Neither is it denied, as I know, that he was orthodox in the Notion of "the Church, as a Christian Fellowship, rightly formed, "according to the Pattern deliver'd by Christ Himself, "and *knit together by the Bond of the Spirit*, under Pastors "and Officers of several Orders, having a clear and certain Mission from Him, whom they represent; but he "under the Character of a Prophet, as an Order established "in the Church, appear'd (without bringing any new Doctrine)

" ctrine) for reviving what was decay'd, and reforming " what might be amiſs: Whereas others that had been " judged for Hereticks, were not only Preachers of ſtrange " and monſtrous Opinions, but were utter Enemies to all " Manner of Diſcipline in the Church.

§. 28. " There was alſo one *Priſcilla* or *Priſca*, who " among others was ſeiz'd by that Spirit, which we will " in Charity, preſume, they did verily take, to be the true " Spirit of Prophecy. She was Rich, and could have no " need of acting the Propheteſs for Bribes, and no Induce- " ment from Worldly Conſiderations, to expreſs her ſelf " at ſo ſtrange a manner, as ſhe did. Indeed, their Lives " in general, were outwardly holy and blameleſs; and " ſhe in particular, was extremely careſs'd by Perſons of " the beſt Condition, and did abound in Works of Cha- " rity; nay, ſhe was honoured and appealed to, by ſome " in the higheſt Station in the Church. *Maximilla* was " another Propheteſs; in nothing inferior to the former, " for ſhe was by Birth honourable, and is ſaid to have had " a good Eſtate. Beſides theſe, there was one *Alcibiades*, " who was in mighty Reputation, for his Propheſying " and ſpeaking by the Spirit, inſomuch, that before the " Year, 176. he was had in Eſteem as a great Pro- " phet. Another of theſe, who had the Signs of Prophecy " upon them, was *Theodotus* in *Thrace*, remarkable for In- " ſpir'd Gifts: *Proculus*, or *Proclus*, was another eminent " Doctor and Prophet of this Sort, who flouriſh'd about " the Year 200. in *Italy*, and there was no manner of " Error, in Point of Faith or Doctrine, that he could, ſo " far as I can find, be ever charged with; except in this " one Thing only, That he own'd the Spirit in *Montanus*, " to be no other than the true Spirit of God, and thereby " was in the Opinion of many, a Blaſphemer againſt the " Holy Spirit. Theſe, and ſeveral others, did propheſy in " the Name of the Holy Spirit, the *Paracleet* or Comfort- " er, and did pretend Authority to teach in the Aſſemblies " of Chriſtians, having the faireſt Shew of Godlineſs, and " higheſt Pretenſions to the Perfection of the Chriſtian Re- " ligion; and all Men concluded, that there muſt be " ſomewhat in the Caſe, beyond a bare Natural Enthu- " ſiaſm, and that there was ſome Spirit, Good or Evil, " which managed the Springs. Now, the Spirit they were " acted by, did certainly Perſonate the Holy Ghoſt, *and* " *they all ſpoke in his Name*; upon which Foot it is gene-

" rally

" rally thought, that they, and particularly *Montanus*, were " condemn'd by the Church, for blaſphemouſly aſſuming, " each One to himſelf, the Name and Title of the *Para-* " *cleet.* But this ſeems to have been *invented in latter Times*, " leſt he and they ſhould appear to have been anathema- " tized for Hereticks, on little or no Ground. But certain- " ly, the greateſt Doctors of the Church, would never " have been at ſuch Pains, and wrote ſo many learn- " ed Books, in order to confute him, had he been really " guilty of ſo groſs and mad a Blaſphemy; neither is it to " be thought, that he could have had, in thoſe early " Times, ſo very near the Apoſtles, almoſt any Followers " at all, had he been either ſo wild an Enthuſiaſt, or ſuch " an open Blaſphemer againſt the Holy Ghoſt: Whereas " this Sect of People ſpread over all *Cilicia*, *Pontus*, *Cap-* " *padocia*, *Galatia*, *Phrygia* and *Italy*, and affected many " Perſons of the greateſt Eminence, and laſted ſeveral " Ages; and beſides, none of his Contemporaries, nor " any of his moſt profeſſed Adverſaries, ever knew any " thing of it, or took the leaſt notice, as ſurely they would " have done, of ſo horrid a Blaſphemy: Wherefore it muſt " needs have been, a fictitious Hereſy impoſed upon him, " for the better colouring of the Proceedings againſt " him."

§ 29. When we read that the *Montaniſts* are call'd *Here-* *ticks*, or charged with *Hereſy*, we are to underſtand, that the Word being *Greek*, ſignified antiently no more than an Opinion, or *Sect*, uſed in a good Senſe, as in *Acts* xxvi. 5. as well as an evil one. But if we take Hereſy in the modern Senſe, to mean ſome Error in Doctrine, oppoſite to any particular Chriſtian Truth, the *Montaniſt*, or inſpir'd Chriſtian Prophets, are at large already by our Author acquitted from it. Thus alſo, Mr. *Dodwell* in *Diſſert.* 4. on *Irenæus*, *p.* 371. ſays," That when *Miltiades* wrote againſt " *Montanus* and his Propheteſſes, he did not oppoſe them " on the Account of Hereſy, but of *falſe Prophecy*. In like " Manner did others alſo, ſays our Author, who engaged " in this Controverſy; for the Point even of their being " falſe or true Prophets, was long under Queſtion, before " they obtained the Name of Hereticks." Wherefore, ſince the Name of Hereſy was confined wholly to their adhering to the Holy Spirit, as they believ'd it; and even in this, before the Chriſtian World had admitted entirely, their Excomunication to be valid, they were long eſteem'd

as Perſons acted, and propheſying by the Holy Spirit, in ſeveral Countries, whilſt in others they were ſentenced and accounted of, as acted and propheſying by an evil one. The Caſe then thus hanging in Suſpenſe, whether they were chargeable with any Crime at all, it is alſo worthy of Obſervation, that as theſe Prophets did all perſonate God, and ſpeak in his Name, which further appears by ſome Scraps of their Inſpirations, recited by *Euſebius* and *Epiphanius*; yet the ſpeaking in the Perſon of God, was never imputed to them, as a Circumſtance unſuitable to the Evangelical Prophet. On the contrary, *Juſtin Martyr* does expreſly mention the Chriſtian Prophets in his Time, to ſpeak in the Name and Perſon of God: Wherefore, and becauſe the ſame Manner of Utterance in Propheſyings, is provable from the New, conſcentaniouſly with the Old Teſtament, we ſhall take for granted, that a reproaching of the Spirit upon this Head, is but the Invention of latter Times. And thus, we think it needleſs to inſiſt thereon any further, but do proceed to preſent the Reader with the other promiſed Repreſentation of the Caſe with the *Montaniſts*.

§ 30. In the Year 1699. and 1709. there was printed in *High-Dutch*, at *Franckfort*, Two large Volumes in Folio, Entituled, *An impartial Hiſtory of the Church, and of Hereticks*, by *Godfrey Arnold*, a *Lutheran* Divine; who in the Extract here ſubſequent, of what concerned the *Montaniſts*, backs his Aſſertions with very numerous Citations out of the antient Fathers, and other Authors of Repute, that have treated of the Eccleſiaſtical Affairs of the primitive Church. Which References, becauſe their Number would be an Incumbrance to this Place, and that I have no Means to conſult moſt of the Authorities he names, I ſhall leave out. This Book has been already tranſlated into the *Low-Dutch*; but whether into any other Language yet, I know not: But the Tranſlation of that Part which concerns *Montaniſm*, I have from a Friend of mine a *German*, who I am ſure could not be byaſs'd in his tranſlating it, by any Purpoſe of mine, in the Application herein made of it. The Author is a Miniſter, eſteem'd in *Germany*, of the firſt Rank for Learning, who has clear'd himſelf of the Imputation of irregular Quotations in thoſe Volumes charg'd upon him. And the Extract here added, may be found in that Treatiſe, in *Part.* I. *lib.* ii. *cap.* 4. *p.* 76.

§ 23. "About

§ 31. " About the Year of our Lord, 170. hapned that " great Diviſion in the Church, on Occaſion of the *Mon-* " *taniſts*, otherwiſe call'd *Cataphrygians*, *Pepuzians*, &c. the " Account of whom is in ſhort this; *Montanus*, it ſeems, " began then to be very zealous againſt thoſe, that admit- " ted any body into their Communion, without conſider- " ing whether he were truly penitent or not, and com- " plained of the Neglect of the true Diſcipline of the " Church. The Caſe of the Chriſtians at that Time *(and* " *Place)* was ſuch, that, tho' their external Perſecutions " drove them often home to Godward; yet as ſoon as " they had a little Reſpit from outward Troubles, their " Zeal did ſo abate, and they grew ſo ſecure and negli- " gent, that many did oftentimes under ſevere Trials " from their Perſecutors, renounce Chriſt; but after theſe " Trials were over, having no Reſt in their Conſciences, " they would fain be reconciled again to the Chriſtian " Church: And thus it often hapned, that Biſhops and " Elders, either out of Compaſſion, or other ſiniſter clan- " deſtine Ends, re-admitted thoſe into their Communion, " that did not ſeriouſly repent of their Apoſtacy. This " was the Beginning of the Corruption enſuing in the " Church, that they made no Difference between Penitents " and Hypocrites, altho' the ſincere Chriſtians always op- " poſed it: For 'tis well known, how in St. *Cyprian*'s Time, " and before and after him, not only Idolaters and Apo- " ſtates, but alſo Adulterers (and Murderers) were denied " the Reconciliation of the Church; and to this alſo *Ter-* " *tullian* appeals, as to the moſt antient and conſtant Cu- " ſtom of the primitive Chriſtians.

§ 32. " *Montanus* ſeeing this diſmal Confuſion, and fore- " ſeeing the dangerous Conſequence of it, oppoſed it as " much as he was able. And ſince in his firſt Zeal, he " might perhaps uſe ſeveral hard Expreſſions, which thoſe " that were tinctured already with an Opinion ſo agreea- " ble to the Fleſh, could not brook; they preſently coin- " ed ſeveral abſurd and ſcandalous Stories of him; which " is a Fate, attending all thoſe, who with a ſincere Deſign, " yea ſometimes out of meer Compaſſion, declare the " Truth (in ſuch Caſes) either to one ſingle Perſon, or to " a whole Society, or Nation. The Diſpute grew at " length to that Height, that it broke out into an open " Schiſm, becauſe thoſe were not willing to be upbraided

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" with any thing, concerning the external Diſcipline, or " concerning the Means to remove the Scandal; but they " widen'd the Difference more and more, between them- " ſelves and *Montanus*, who on his Part, was poſſibly con- " ſcious of his ſincere Intention; they ſaid however, that " he did thus, only to gratify his Ambition, and to ſhew " himſelf to be a Man of ſingular Parts, (and Piety,) nay " they gave out, he was a *Madman*, perſwading the Peo- " that he was *poſſeſſed of the Devil*. Wherefore, he was " forbid to teach, for Fear of deluding any body; eſpeci- " ally when they ſaw the People favour'd his Doctrine, " whereſoever it came to be known. After this, they be- " gan to excomunicate his Followers, loading them with " the foulleſt Aſperſions, ſuch as they never, or very ſel- " dom had expreſſed before, touching the Practiſers of the " vileſt of Offences. In this Manner, was the Beginning " of their Diſpute.

§ 33. " Among other Complaints they made of him, " was this, that he ſeem'd to them too ſtrict, in his Way " of Living; for he obſerved certain Duties in his Faſt- " Days, and made a Difference in his Meats, the more to " promote Temperance and Decency. This expoſed him " to many critical and ſiniſter Interpretations; for they " gave out, that his Choice of Diet did not proceed from " the Principle of Temperance, or of Love to Piety and " its Reward, but from an Abomination he had to ſome " particular Creatures of God: But this latter Imputati- " on was apparently falſe; for his Friend *Tertullian* up- " braids the *Tatians* and *Marcionites*, with that of St. *Paul*, " 1 *Tim.* iv. 3. (commanding to abſtain from Meats) be- " cauſe they out of a particular Fancy, would not eat cer- " tain Meats, by reaſon of their intrinſick Malignity; the " Oppoſers of *Montanus*, ſaid alſo, that he diſſolved Ma- " trimony, becauſe he did not approve of Second Marria- " ges, tho' in and after his Time, the greateſt Men of the " Church, were of the ſame Opinion with him.

§ 34. " Neither was *Montanus* liked, by thoſe who other- " wiſe were true Believers, becauſe he made it a Doctrine, " That it was unbecoming a Chriſtian to fly from Per- " ſecutions, alledging many Inſtances of his Followers, " that ſuffer'd Martyrdom, which he took for a ſure Sign " of the Divine Power: But his Opponents anſwer'd, That " every Party according to their Opinion could produce

" Mar-

" Martyrs, which in Truth were not ſo; yea, they deny'd,
" That any *Montaniſt* ever ſuffer'd for Chriſt's ſake, be-
" cauſe they could prove from the Records of the Hea-
" then Magiſtrate, that one of them (following *Montanus*)
" had given a Sum of Mony for his Life, and that others
" had ſuffer'd for their own Wickedneſs; notwithſtanding
" that, it was well known, that the Heathens (if their
" Report muſt decide) never wanted Crimes to charge up-
" on Chriſtians, when they had a mind to exerciſe their
" Cruelty. This Reproach therefore, might have been
" prov'd as well upon a great many others (beſides *Monta-*
" *niſts*) and that with more Truth too; but by this hint,
" that the *Orthodox* Chriſtians, would allow none but their
" own Party to have been any genuine Martyrs, One may
" ſee the Antiquity of that ſo deeply now feſter'd Opinion;
" as if, the outward Profeſſion could ſuffice for eternal Sal-
" vation; and as if God did not accept thoſe of any Par-
" ty, that fear Him, and work Righteouſneſs. Notwith-
" ſtanding this, 'tis apparently manifeſt, that *Montanus* and
" his Partizans, had a vehement Deſire to ſuffer for Chriſt's
" ſake, and fear'd no Torments whatſoever; for they in
" their Writings, do expreſly, and with good Arguments,
" evince the Neceſſity of being conſtant and immoveable.
" Yea, they prov'd to the Faces of their Enemies, That
" Biſhops, Elders and Deacons, and the whole *Orthodox*
" Miniſtry, gave but ill Examples, in leaving their Flocks
" as Hirelings, in the Times of Perſecution, and indeed
" in leading otherwiſe, but indifferent and ſcandalous
" Lives. By which Proofs, the *Montaniſts* fully anſwer'd
" all the above-mention'd Aſperſions, together with thoſe,
" whereby they are ſaid to have extorted many Collections
" of the People, whilſt that they (the Leaders) fared
" ſumptuouſly and delicately; for this Imputation, did
" not ſuit with that other of their auſtere and ſtrict Way of
" Living; neither had their Accuſer on this Head, any
" Proof for it, tho' he promis'd, with a great many bom-
" baſted and fuſty Expreſſions, to give the ſame.

§ 35. *The Gift of Prophecy*, was the chief Thing, which
" the *Montaniſts* were not allow'd to have, tho' One may
" ſee a great many amongſt them, to have been endow'd
" therewith, the ſame being ſtill very frequent at that
" Time; and it was this ſame Gift, which made not on-
" ly *Montanus*, but alſo *Theodotus* and *Alcibiades*, ſo fa-
" mous,

" mous, in ſpite of all the violent Contradictions of their " Adverſaries. The reaſon perhaps of the Notoriety of the " Fact was, becauſe their Clamours and Diſputings, raiſ- " ed People's Curioſity to enquire into the Matter, who " finding no ſufficient, or Chriſtian Arguments againſt " them, Men could not but diſcover the Weakneſs and " Paſſion of the Accuſers: As for Inſtance, *Miltiades* al- " ledg'd againſt them, That neither the Prophets of the " Old or New Teſtament, had ſuch Extacies and Geſtures, " when they deliver'd their Prophecies; *Ergo*, the *Monta-* " *niſts* were erroneous: The ſame *Miltiades* affirms, That " Chriſt and his Apoſtles foretold nothing of theſe Pro- " phets; neither were their Predictions of Wars and other " great Calamities, fulfill'd, tho' Thirteen Years agone " declar'd. But all theſe Objections, a Learned Author " juſtly accounts of no Value, and all the Writings of theſe " Gainſayers, to have been full of rhetorical Emptineſs. " It is ſuppos'd, that theſe Doctors in ordinary, were moſt " piequed at two Women, *Priſcilla* and *Maximilla*, who " Propheſied publickly; theſe therefore they called *Mon-* " *tanus*'s Concubines, tho' by others they were eſteem'd " real Propheteſſes; for the Gift of Prophecy was very well " known to be common, among all ſorts of People.

§ 36. " The moſt abominable Calumny of all, that the " *Orthodox* Gentlemen fix'd upon *Montanus*, was this; " That they ſaid, he pretended to be the Holy Spirit Him- " ſelf; which horrible Blaſphemy, many among the Cler- " gy repeated afterwards, to the egregious diſguiſing of " Truth; ſome alſo add to this Calumny, as if the *Mon-* " *taniſts* had pretended, that the fulneſs of the Spirit had " not been granted unto the Apoſtles, but was unto them: " Beſides theſe, they trump'd up many frivolous Objecti- " ons, the Falſeneſs whereof, a Man may diſcover at firſt " ſight; for *Tertullian* ſpeaks always of *Montanus* in ſuch a " manner, that he expreſly diſtinguiſhes between him and " the Holy Spirit; from whence 'tis evident, that as well " *Montanus* himſelf, as thoſe of his Party, aſſerted nothing " elſe of him, but that he was inſpired by the Holy Spi- " rit, which alſo many *MODERN*, as well as Antient " *Writers*, ſay of him. *Philaſtrius Hær.* 49. *Autor Prede-* " *ſtinat. Hær.* 26. *Baron. A.* 173. *n.* 26. *Ittigius de Hær.* " Sect. ii. car 13. n. 3. (not one of which Authors did I " ever hear of; wherefore this may plead my Excuſe, in " not citing his manifold other References.)

§ 37.

§ 37. "There is another abominable Blaſphemy touch-
" ing the *Montaniſts*, reported in many credulous Authors,
" taken up, from thoſe who were the firſt Inventors of it,
" after the Manner of ſuch Perſons, who think Orthodoxy
" conſiſts, in branding their Neighbours with falſe Accuſati-
" ons. Say they, The *Montaniſts* us'd to call the following
" Abominations, their Sacraments; They had a Child of a
" Year old in their Meeting, which they prick'd every where
" with Pins, and when they had done ſo, they took the
" Blood, and mix'd it with Flour, and ſo made Bread of
" it; this they call'd their Communion: If the Child dy'd,
" it was a Martyr; if it liv'd, they gave him the Title of
" God's High Prieſt. But the earlieſt Writers of this Sto-
" ry, do not at all agree about it; *Epiphanius* relates it of
" the *Quintillians*, (for there were many Sects took upon
" themſelves, in ſucceeding Ages, a Denomination from
" ſome one or other of the Primitive *Montaniſts*,) from
" whom *Auſtin* takes it; the reſt of the Authors, venting
" this Story, do generally uſe the Expreſſions, *'tis ſaid*; *there*
" *is a Report*, or the like, when they relate it; which ſhews
" their Ignorance and Uncertainty, in a Matter of ſo great
" Moment; and no doubt they had ſome Check in their
" Conſciences (in the mention of it) except they were
" quite ſear'd with the Opinion, that they ſhould do God
" Almighty a particular Service, if they ſtoutly inveigh'd
" againſt ſuch, as were once declar'd Hereticks. For, the
" Truth is, the moſt violent Enemies of the *Montaniſts*, at
" that Time (before *Conſtantine*) do not mention one Syl-
" lable of this Story, that is, neither *Apollonius* nor the
" reſt, who catch'd at all they could wrap and rend, to
" blacken their Character. But there are other Authors,
" who tho' they conceal nothing odious, of what they can
" ſay againſt Hereticks; yet confeſs ſincerely, that this
" Story is nothing elſe but a malicious Calumny, that
" can never be prov'd, and therefore they call it, a jing-
" ling Tale of a Tub. *Hierom*, *Theodoret*, and others, ſay
" therefore, that it deſerves no Credit, and ſo ought to
" be rather paſſed over in ſilence; which may ſerve for
" an Evidence, how far thoſe Stories are to be believed,
" which the *Orthodox* Authors put upon Hereticks.

§ 38. "The Report of *Apollonius* deſerves as little Cre-
" dit, who ſaith, That *Montanus* and *Maxamilla*, had
" been inſpir'd by a Delirious Spirit, and that they both

hang-

" hanged themſelves, like *Judas* the Traytor. The ſame " Reporter ſays, That *Theodotus*, one of their Friends (and " a Prophet) ran mad with the phrenzical Conceit, to " be carry'd to Heaven alive, and ſo flinging himſelf in- " to the Air, miſerably loſt his Life; for tho' *Apollonius* " himſelf owns he had not ſeen it, nor had any ground " for the truth of it, but only was told it as a common " Story; yet he is not aſham'd for all that, to take this " abominable Lye into his Mouth, and to vomit it out " again, that it might ſerve as a Proof, that the *Orthodox* " Gentlemen were not the Murderers of thoſe Prophets, " ſince they kill'd themſelves. The Author here goes on to " give ſeveral further Inſtances of their treating the *Monta-* " *niſts*, (as true Prophets us'd to be dealt with, that is, pelt- " them with Dirt, and then adds,) But not to mention " any more of this Stuff, all Authors ſay, That in the " Fundamental Points of Chriſtianity, they did not differ " from true Believers: Wherefore, *Tertullian* openly com- " plains againſt their Adverſaries, ſaying, That theſe con- " feſs'd, they did not reject the *Montaniſts*, as if they " preach'd another God, or deny'd Jeſus Chriſt, or as " if they inverted one ſingle Point of the Chriſtian Faith " and Hope, but merely becauſe they urg'd the Neceſſity " of Faſting and Temperance, and for this Reaſon, theſe " were call'd by the *Orthodox*, *falſe Prophets*, who taught " their People to keep good Order, and to be temperate " in all Things, and they who practis'd the ſame, muſt " preſently be counted Hereticks. *Tertul. of Faſting, cap.* i. " and *cap.* 12.

§ 39. " Nevertheleſs, tho' they had nothing to ſay againſt " theſe juſt Complaints of *Tertullian*, they went on, accord- " ing to Cuſtom, with their uſual Clamours, reviving the " old Stories, and inventing new ones too; for tho' they " were ſelf-convinced of the Soundneſs of the *Montaniſts* " Faith, and met with the contrary (of what they charg- " ed) in *Tertullian*, yet they would notwithſtanding all this, " brand them with *Sabellianiſm*, and other falſe Teners of " God and his Attributes. And nothing could be more " abſurd, than ſome of the Nick-names their Accuſers gave " them about Bread and Cheeſe, and about putting a piece " of Wood into their Noſtrills for Devotion, and about " dancing around a great cover'd Bottle in their Aſſem- " blies, jovial and drunken as the Heathen; which Sort " of Stories furniſhed to the ſcornful Unbelievers, an Oc-

" caſion

" caſion of Laughter, and to others, Occaſions of Re-
" proach; and theſe Fooleries have been by ſome Authors,
" as ſadly refuted, as related. How ill theſe People were
" uſed, appears not only by the many foremention'd Im-
" putations, but alſo by other perverſe Proceedings againſt
" them; for they were rejected, and condemn'd, by all thoſe
" Congregations, wherein *Apollinaris* and others of their
" inveterate Enemies had the Sway, and were ſo haraſſed
" and tormented, that they could do no other than com-
" plain of hard Perſecutions. But notwithſtanding all
" theſe Perſecutions, and for all the ſtrict Diſcipline and
" auſtere Way of living, among the *Montaniſts*, many went
" over to them, with a hearty Deſire doubtleſs, the better
" to ſerve God; becauſe there, they had more Opportu-
" nity for it, than among the ſo called *Orthodox* Chriſti-
" ans, or Miniſters themſelves; where they ſaw nothing
" but Diſorders, as *Tertullian* and others after his Time,
" bear Witneſs to the Truth, in.

§ 40. " After theſe Things, even in the Time of the ſo-
" named Chriſtian Emperors, they the *Montaniſts* were dri-
" ven out of their Cities, in a violent Manner, and had
" their Books burnt; whilſt on the contrary, their Accu-
" ſers were cry'd up for Heroes and Champions of the
" Church, who made no Bones (ſome Way or other) to at-
" tribute all to the Devil, whatſoever was done by the *Mon-*
" *niſts*; on purpoſe, at once, either to deter every body from
" approving any thing of theirs, or from ſearching any fur-
" ther into the Truth of the Matter, as it was in Fact."
Wherefore, tho' the Deſign and main Scope of this preſent Enquiry, is to ſearch after the Principles and dogmatizing of the firſt apoſtatizing Church among Chriſtians, in their rejecting and vilifying the Spirit of Prophecy in general, by Preſcriptions laid down, upon Occaſion of the *Montaniſts*; yet if any thing herein, does appear in Defence of them ſpecially, it is evident from this Citation, that there have been ſeveral before us, and thoſe no obſcure modern Writers, that have publickly affirmed *Montanus* to have been inſpired by the Holy Spirit, and not by a Devil, as he generally is concluded.

§ 41. It appearing, by both theſe Repreſentations, that one of the firſt Occaſions of Conteſt upon this Subject, was, that the ſevere Manner of reproving, uſed by the Spirit in *Montanus* gave Offence: In regard to the Honour and Privi-

lege of the Spirit of Prophecy therefore, we cannot here but obſerve, that the ſame does always in Scripture, appear the genuine Caracteriſtick of the true Spirit, who has therefore right to claim that Prerogative over Men. And this is, not only in Fact remarkable, in the New Teſtament as well as the Old, whereof Inſtances almoſt numberleſs might be produced, but even the Spirit it ſelf is often deſcribed, and in ſome ſort denominated by that Quality. Thus Chriſt Himſelf is propheſied of, under the Character of a Reprover, *Iſa.* xi. 3, 4. and our Saviour in promiſing the Comforter to his Church, ſays in *John* xvi. 8. *when He is come, He will reprove the World of Sin.* Nay, we do not find, that the *Jews* objected to *John Baptiſt* upon this Head, becauſe it is declared the Property of the Spirit, to ſlay Men with the Words of his Mouth, as *Ezekiel* was made a Reprover, *Chap.* iii. 26. Therefore is it, that Divine Wiſdom in Prophecy, lays it down as an eſſential in him, to reprove, as appears *Prov.* i. 23, 25, 30. And thus is it in particular, denounced to the Prieſts, that God reſerves the Authority to Himſelf, *to reprove their Seed*, Mal. ii. 1, 3. Upon all which Accounts, it ought not to be allowed, that the Quality of Reproving, obſervable in the Spirit among the *Montaniſts*, ſhould be taken for a Mark of a Diabolical one. But having made this one Reflection, upon the Repreſentations given us, of the State of the Caſe in general, I now proceed from the Author of *Montaniſm*, to exhibit a Detail more particular of the Articles, whereon the Spirit in *Montanus* was adjudged for Diabolical.

CHAP. II.

Of Controverted PROPHECY, *in the* Second *and* Third Century.

SAys the *Hiſtory of Montaniſm*, "The Reaſons and principal Grounds, on which *the Biſhops of Aſia* went in "their Trial and Condemnation of *Montanus*, *Maximilla* "and *Theodotus*, and in cutting them off from the Church, "for being *poſſeſſed and acted* by an evil Spirit, (as they are "here and there, by ſeveral Authors deliver'd) may be "reduced to theſe following;

"Firſt, *That the Spirit of* Montanus, *and of his Prophets,* "*could not be the Spirit of Chriſt, becauſe it was not the Spirit* "*of the Church.*

Secondly,

" Secondly, *The Spirit of these Prophets, could not be the* " *Spirit that was in the Apoſtles of Chriſt, becauſe it could not* " *bring the leaſt Proof of its being communicated from them the* " *ſaid Apoſtles, or from any that had receiv'd it from them.*

" Thirdly, *The* Cataphrygian *Spirit could not be the Spi-* " *rit of the Apoſtles, and conſequently not of Chriſt, whilſt it* " *pretended to greater Prerogatives, than thoſe ever enjoyed, or* " *could lay Claim to, by Virtue of the Promiſe of their Lord.*

" Fourthly, *This could not be that Spirit which it pretended* " *to be, becauſe it wanted the Marks of the true Prophetical and* " *Apoſtolical Spirit; and was not able to give that Demonſtra-* " *tion to others, which the Apoſtles and Prophets gave to the* " *Truth of their Meſſage, or indeed any Demonſtration at all.*

" Fifthly, *The Spirit of* Montanus, *and his Apoſtles, was* " *not the Spirit of Chriſt, and His; becauſe inſtead of removing* " *the heavy Burden of Legal Obſervances, it was ſtill for ma-* " *king it more heavy.*

" Sixthly, *The Spirit of* Montanus, Maximilla *and* Priſ- " cilla, *was a Diabolical Spirit of Impoſture, in their pre-* " *tending to a higher Degree of Purity, Saintſhip and Abſtra-* " *ction than all other Chriſtians.*

" Seventhly, *Their Spirit could not be the Holy One, becauſe* " *they indulged themſelves in Feaſting and Gluttony, and dyed* " *their Hair, and blackned their Eye-brows, and painted their* " *Faces, and affected fine Clothes, and played at Tables and* " *Dice.*

" Eighthly, *It was not to be thought, that any, who were the* " *Prophets and Meſſengers of the true God, would either give, or* " *take Bribes, as ſome of theſe did.*

" Ninthly, *There was no Obligation to receive that Spirit* " *which refuſed to be try'd according to the ſtanding Rules,* " *both in the* Jewiſh *and* Chriſtian *Church; or reaſon to think,* " *that it could be the Spirit of Jeſus, which would by no means,* " *ſubmit to be adjured in the Name of Jeſus.*

" Tenthly, *The Spirit of theſe Prophets was not a Spirit of* " *Martyrdom; for notwithſtanding all their great Boaſtings,* " *and their expreſs Declarations againſt the Lawfulneſs of reti-* " *ring to avoid Perſecution, none did more ſhamefully betray* " *the Cauſe of Chriſtianity, when they were brought to the Teſt.*

" Eleventhly, *This Spirit was very unlike the Spirit which* " *had appear'd in the Prophets of the New Teſtament, as parti-* " *cularly in* Agabus, *the Daughters of* Philip, Melito, Qua- " dratus, *and* Amia *of* Philadelphia; *and very like the Spi-* " *rit which had appear'd in the Heathen Prophets and Prieſts,*

" *and particularly in the* Energumens, *who were by the Chri-*
" *ſtians ordinarily diſpoſſeſs'd, in the Name and Spirit of Chriſt.*
" Twelfthly, *It could not be a true Divine Spirit, which*
" *bereft* the Poſſeſs'd *with it, of the Uſe of thoſe Faculties*
" *which are God's Gift to us; nor a Spirit of Holy Underſtan-*
" *ding, which by ſtripping them of all Underſtanding, turned*
" *them for the Time into Brutes and Stocks.*
" Thirteenthly, *It could not be a true Spirit of Revelation*
" *from God, which utter'd any thing in his Name and Perſon,*
" *that proved to be falſe. Wherefore, the Spirit of* Maximilla,
" *and every Spirit which acknowledged hers to be a true one, could*
" *not be from God; ſince it was evidently made out, that cer-*
" *tain Predictions of hers being deciſive, were never verified; but*
" *on the contrary, were notoriouſly baffled by the Succeſs.*
" Fourteenly, *The Authority of that Spirit could not be di-*
" *vine, which was for encouraging private Perſons to ſet up a*
" *new Order of Diſcipline, in the Church, how good and holy*
" *ſoever in it ſelf, and thereby, deſpiſing an Authority in the*
" *Rulers of it, which was certainly Divine.*"

Theſe being the principal Grounds, whereon the Inſpir'd were concluded to propheſy by an evil Spirit, as they are ſummed up by Dr. *Hicks*, in the *Hiſtory of Montaniſm*; we ſhall now, in Purſuit of our Purpoſe and main Deſign, examine under every Article diſtinctly, whether the Accuſers and Judges did not therein diſcover, ſome injurious Practices againſt the Holy Ghoſt, or Spirit of Prophecy, which was in thoſe Ages generally ſtiled, the Preſence of Chriſt (or Chriſt preſent) with his Church, as in the Second Part or this Treatiſe has been mention'd. And if there be any ſuch dogmatizing found, on the Occaſion of *Montanus* and others, it follows of Courſe, that this was a falling away, or Apoſtacy in the Church, that may juſtly be termed *Antichriſtianiſm*, and a Tendency to a Revolt from Chriſt her Sovereign. As to the particular Caſe of *Montanus*, tho' it be the leaſt Matter now worthy to be conſider'd, yet, as the main Point cannot be duly and fully underſtood, without deſcending into a minute Diſcuſſion of that Particular; we hope, we may therein find Excuſe, becauſe of the abſolute Neceſſity for doing ſo, in Order to purſue the higher End above-mention'd. Wherefore, it will be needful alſo, to examine every Article, by the Rules of judging, and the Circumſtances of Things, as they were then among the Churches of Chriſt. As on

ARTICLE I.

The Spirit of Montanus, *and his Prophets, could not be the Spirit of Chriſt, becauſe it was not the Spirit of the Church.*

Anſwer. We have heard already that the Inſpir'd owned no other Stile than of *Spiritual*, but were nicknamed by their Opponents from the Name of *Montanus*, even as the Chriſtians were termed by the *Jews*, the *Sect of the Nazereens*, *Galileans* and the like, according to the uſual Dialect of Reproach: Wherefore, it can be accounted no other than a meer Slander, to ſay, that any one of theſe was *Montanus*'s Prophet. But taking it for granted, the Words, *his Prophets*, mean no more, than ſuch Perſons who were acted by a Spirit, as he was; the general Propoſition couched in this Article is, That the Spirit in a Prophet cannot be true, unleſs he is acknowledg'd by the exiſting Church; for, as to *the Spirit of the Church*, if the Church cenſuring was therein, directed by the Spirit of Prophecy, or his extraordinary Gift of Diſcernment, they the Cenſurers, ought to have ſignified this, to us, and have built their Sentence upon it; but we find not the leaſt Word, intimating any thing of this kind; tho' they had the ſtrongeſt Reaſons poſſible, to have vindicated their Proceedings, by ſuch an Authority pleaded, if they had it, being themſelves taxed with having fallen away from their firſt Love, the Love of the Spirit, and having no more than an outward and empty Character of proper Judges in this Caſe, becauſe they had loſt his extraordinary Gifts. Taking it therefore, for granted, that by *the Spirit of the Church*, there is here no more to be underſtood, than the Sentiment or Opinion of the Biſhops and Paſtors of it uninſpir'd,

The Concluſion of this Article, *That the Spirit in a Prophet cannot be true, unleſs he is acknowledg'd by the exiſting Church*, I take to be a Syſtem of meer human Invention, and utterly anti-ſcriptural: For, in the Old Teſtament, there is nothing more remarkable, than the Complaint of the Prophet himſelf, in being deſpiſed, hated, reproached, rejected and perſecuted, for the Word of the Lord ſpoken by him; and the Houſe of *Iſrael* are almoſt conſtantly taxed with being rebellious, going back, and turning away from God, upon this Occaſion; and are by our Saviour, charged with the Blood of all the Prophets. In the New Teſtament alſo, altho' we have not a Hiſtory of like Treatment, from the Chriſtian Churches, and indeed no Account at all properly hiſtorical, but juſt of their Formation, and

new Eſtabliſhment by the Spirit; yet our Saviour, by way of Prediction ſpeaks of Prophets that ſhould need a Cup of cold Water, and that ſome whom He ſhould ſend, would be perſecuted and ſlain. Divers other Paſſages there are in the Goſpels, which do intimate the like Things to come; and I ſee not how they can be reſtrained in their Meaning, to the Oppoſition of the unbelieving *Jews* only. But becauſe there will be further Occaſion of ſhewing the general Propoſition of this Article to be falſe, I here add no more than the Words of our Lord in *Rev.* ii. 13. wherein he ſpeaks of ſome future State of the Chriſtian Church, wherein Satan was to dwell, and be ſeated as on a Throne, (θρονος,) and *Antipas* (conſtrued by the Learned, one or more Prophets) his faithful Witneſs (μαρτυς,) was to be ſlain among them. And when the Mother of Harlots, and Revolters from Chriſt, or the Great Whore diſtinguiſhed from leſſer ones, comes to be judged, in her will be found the Blood of Prophets, ſlain upon the Earth, *Chap.* xviii. 24. So that, *Babylon the Great*, meaning an apoſtatized Eſtate of the Chriſtian Church, there muſt of Neceſſity have been ſome Prophets, whoſe Blood ſhe is there charged to have ſhed. Wherefore, having here ſhew'd that this Article advances one Dogma or Syſtem anti-ſcriptural, whereby the true Spirit of Prophecy at any Time, might be condemn'd poſſibly, we now proceed to the particular Application thereof.

When we find then, that it's concluded, the Spirit of *Montanus* and of his Prophets, could not be the Spirit of Chriſt, becauſe it was not *the Spirit of the Church*, all Men will be now-a-days ready to infer, that the Sentiment of the Church univerſal concurred to this Sentence. As to the Matter of Fact therefore, if it was not ſo, we can ſay no leſs, than that it was a Piece of Arrogance and Uſurpation, for any particular Part, to take upon it the Stile and Character of the whole. But whether the whole Church of Chriſtians did concur, in the Condemnation and Excommunication of theſe inſpir'd and ſpiritual Perſons, deſerves well to be enquired into, leſt the ſacred Name of *the Church of Chriſt*, ſhould be vilified and abuſed at any Time, by this leading Preſident, at the Luſt and Pleaſure of Men. To ſearch after which Truth in Fact, we will now recite, what appears of the then Generation, for Thirty or Forty Years, who were Eye and Ear Witneſſes of it, and better capable in Conſequence to judge thereof, than thoſe at a farther Remove.

Firſt,

First then, for the Churches in *Asia*, where the Inspir'd so condemn'd did live, we here present the Account of this Matter, from the Words of the *History of Montanism*, thus; "When *some of the Clergy* attempted to exorcise the Demon "of *Priscilla*, particularly *Sotas*, there were also several other "Bishops that concurred with his Sentiment, concerning "the Possession of *Priscilla*, and in pursuance thereof ex-"communicated her; on the contrary, she was honoured "and appealed to, by *some of the highest Station in the* "*Church*, who owned her to be acted by a true Spirit, and "acknowledg'd her Enthusiasms to be Divine Inspiration." Now, let us remark hereon, that she lived many Years after this Excommunication, without any of those dismal Things attending, which constantly ensued in other Excommunications, in that Age and afterwards, as in the Second Part we have hinted, from the plain Declarations of *Irenæus*, *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*; neither was the Spirit exorcised. But to proceed with the same Author; "*Maximilla* "was strongly opposed by *some of the Phrygian Bishops*, who "did attempt to exorcise this Spirit, but in vain; for she "had not only *Themison*, but *several* other Favourers, who "laid *Claim to as great a Power in the Church as those.* And "very probably it was upon this Occasion, that *Themison* "wrote that Catholick Epistle which he sent to the Church-"es in all Parts, in Vindication of the Spirit which spake "by *Montanus* and his Propheteſſes, the which the *Thra-*"*cian* Bishops would by exorcising, have cast out; but "which he had appear'd for, stifly maintaining it, to be no "other than the true Spirit of God. This Epistle mani-"festly shews him to be of great Fame and Authority; but "of the Arguments that he made use of in it, there is not "the least Account to be had. There was also probably, "among the learned Men and Apologists, Writers for this "Cause, *Miltiades*, *Alcibiades* and *Theodotus*. And indeed "the Writings of the *Orthodox* in this *Controversy*, were "generally but Answers to what had been written in Fa-"vour of the *Phrygian* Prophets, by some that were consi-"derable among their Followers. But of these we know "nothing; the only *Montanist* Author remaining to this "Day is *Tertullian*, and yet of his we have nothing left, "of what he wrote purposely on this Subject." So far "did the Imperial Edicts for burning all the Books of the *Montanists* take Place, to disarm them of a just Defence, and rob future Ages of the Means of due Information in this Case. But to proceed with the Opposition, which the

Condemnation of *Montanus* met with, in the *Aſiatick* Churches.

" *Montanus* had in all Things appear'd moſt zealous for " the Laws and Cuſtoms of the Church; and he continued " a moſt diligent Obſerver of all its Diſcipline, therein " ſtriving to excell every one beſides. Nor is it denied, as " I know, that he was *Orthodox* in the Notion of *the Church*, " as a Chriſtian Fellowſhip rightly formed, according to the " Pattern of Chriſt Himſelf, and knit together by *the Bond* " *of his Spirit*, under Paſtors and Officers of ſeveral Orders, " having a clear and certain Miſſion from Him, whom they " repreſent. Thus they, the *Montaniſts* conformed themſelves in all Things, to the Cuſtoms and Ordinances deliver'd by the Apoſtles, and they did approve themſelves " unto all, ſtrict Obſervers of the Order and Diſcipline, " eſtabliſhed throughout the Churches. After their Excommunication, it appears not, that they made any Alterations conſiderable, in the Eſtabliſhment of the ſame; " but pretending only to rectify ſome Abuſes, continued it " down much the ſame as they found it. It is true, they " were for having all choſen by the Prophetical Order, " that were to be Officers in the Church, and held that " none were to be receiv'd into the Prieſthood, or Presbytery, without an expreſs Deſignation of the Holy Ghoſt, " and without ſome viſible Manifeſtation (φανερωσις,) of " the Divine Unction, as reſting upon them. And thus " there was a Subordination, both of the Epiſcopal and " Prieſtly Orders, to the Spirit in the *Prophets*, and they " ſcrupled not to think, thot *theſe* had more Authority and " Power than the Prieſts and Biſhops. When the *Catholicks* therefore had condemn'd them, they pretended in " the Eſtabliſhment of their ſeparate Communion, they " were not the *Innovators*: Wherefore, they appeal'd alſo " to Catholick Preſcription, and the Cuſtom of the Church, " as if it were wholly on their Side; and their Learned " Men undertook by Arguments drawn from thence, to defend their Cauſe, and ſeem'd to deſire nothing ſo much, " as to be thereby determined. And one of the firſt Rank " among them, has ſo diſcharged himſelf upon this Head, " as even to paſs for it not only uncenſured, but even commended by thoſe, from whoſe Communion he ſtood cut " off: But as in that Tract, he took not the leaſt Notice of " his principal Intent in Writing, this was an oblique Appeal to thoſe Biſhops, that had expell'd the *Montaniſts* from " their Communion, and an Inſinuation that they had not " proceeded therein as Catholick Biſhops." From

From the preceding two Paragraphs, it appears by the Confeſſion of the Author, that the Church in *Aſia*, was far from being entirely conſenting to the Excomunication and Condemnation of the Spirit in theſe Prophets, and therefore the Aſſertion of this Article, *that it was not the Spirit of the Church*, is found to be falſe in Fact, as to *Aſia*. The Churches and Societies of Chriſtian Communion, that were excommunicated, ſeem to have the Advantage rather, in the Apoſtolical Conſtitution of them; for, *as to the Direction and Government of particular Churches, whilſt the Prophetical Gifts remained* (ſaith Mr. *Dodwell*) *there could be no one uninſpir'd ſet over the Prophets, to preſcribe to them.* And when *Irenæus* ſays, *Where a Church is, there is the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit of God is, there is a Church, he aſſerts, that all manner of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, were ſo neceſſary to the connecting together the Conſtituents of a Church, as if no Number of Men, however elſe compacted together, was properly ſuch, if it were deſtitute of thoſe Gifts.* Which Teſtimony of *Irenæus* is the more remarkable, becauſe he lived at the very Time of this Excomunication of the *Montaniſt* Churches, and therefore it is the more likely he might have Regard to the Biſhops excomunicating them, when he mentions ſome Men, *that did endeavour to drive the Grace of Prophecy out of the Church*; for it is evident, that ſome of theſe *Aſiatick* Biſhops aimed at a Denomination and Conſtitution of *the Church*, wherein all Inſpiration and Prophecy ſhould be excluded; ſeeing that the Author of *Montaniſm* tells us expreſly, that *Miltiades*, who wrote one of the beſt Books that ever was written on that Subject, was therein a Witneſs not only againſt *Montanus*, but againſt *all Pretences to new Revelation, which tendeth to break the Unity* of the Spirit in the Church.

"In the Trial of the extraordinary Gifts, ſays Mr. *Dod-*
"*well*, it was not performed by thoſe who were without
"them, but the Judgment was to be made, by the extra-
"ordinary Gifts themſelves. And with reſpect to the Call
"of Miniſters, it was committed to the Diſcerner of the
"Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart, and ſo the Spiri-
"tual Man or Prophet decided of it, and no Man was ad-
"mitted into the publick Offices of the Church, but who
"was ſo approved. And as to Preaching, it was properly
"the Office of the Prophets; and no Man can doubt but
"interpreting the Scripture by Prophecy, is far above the
"human Ways of doing it." Now, theſe Things being reported to us, as the Practice of the Churches, in the Times

Times we are treating of, we may by them conceive, how the Apologiſts for the Inſpir'd who were excomunicated, did juſtify them by Preſcription, and the then Cuſtom of the Churches: And alſo from theſe, we may conclude, That the Condemnation arbitrary of a Prophet by Perſons uninſpir'd, the excluding all Authority of the Spirit extraordinary in the Call and Appointment of Miniſters, and ſuppreſſing the Liberty of Prophetical Preaching in the Churches, were all three Innovations then. But by what has been ſaid, it being evident, that the ſubſiſting Churches in *Aſia*, which owned the Inſpir'd after their Excommunication, were nevertheleſs true Churches; it follows, that the Article as charged, was not true as to them. And now let us examine, how the Matter ſtood with thoſe in *Europe* and *Africa*.

Secondly, Whether this Condemnation of the Inſpir'd which paſſed in *Aſia*, had the concurrence of the Church, entirely in *Europe*, is now to be diſcuſſed; and ſo far as *Irenæus*, Biſhop of *Lyons*, may be ſuppoſed to ſpeak the Senſe of it, we cannot ſee how the ſame ſhould be approved; for in *Lib.* iii. *Cap.* 40. "He there challenges all "Hereticks to ſtand to that Tradition; which from the "Apoſtles, by the Succeſſion of Presbyters, was preſerv'd in "the Church, in which God placed Apoſtles, Prophets, "Teachers, and the general remaining Operation of the "Spirit; whereof they are not Partakers, *who do not run* "*unto the Church, for where the Church is, there is the Spirit*; "*and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and eve-*"*ry Grace Prophetical.*" From which Definition of the Church, the Biſhops of *Aſia* had no right to lay Claim to it; and ſo he could never juſtifie that Authority of theirs, in the Excommunication under Debate. There will alſo farther appear, the Diſſenting of the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vienne*, by their Epiſtle to the Biſhop of *Rome*, concerning which, ſays the Author of *Montaniſm*; "It is the "Opinion of Biſhop *Peirſon*, That *Eleutherius*, Biſhop of "*Rome*, in purſuance of the Letters of the Martyrs of *Ly*-"*ons*, interceeding therein for the peace *of the Church*, did "grant accordingly Peace to *the Church*, by owning the "Propheſyings of *Montanus* to be Divine. And *Valeſius* "alſo ſeems to have been in the ſame Sentiment with "this learned Biſhop; for he ſays, that *Eleutherius*, be-"ing *ſtrongly moved* hereunto by the Martyrs of *Lyons*, "did write expreſly into *Aſia*, to make the *Montaniſts* to "be receiv'd again into the Church; which it is plain he

"under-

" understands of receiving them into it, not as Penitents, " but as approving their Revelations, for the Dictates of " the Holy Spirit; all which, was in consequence, of the " Circulatory Letters written by the Excommunicated Pro- " phets, appealing to foreign Churches, and desiring the " continuauce of their Communion: And however it be as " to the Person, whether *Anicetus* or *Eleutherius*, thus much " at least is undeniably certain, that one of the Bishops of " *Rome*, did receive the *Montanists* into Communion, and " granted his Communicatory Letters to *Montanus*, and to " as many as were in Communion with him. Thus their " Excommunication being declared invalid at *Rome*, they " were actually receiv'd into Communion with that Church, " and with the Churches communicating with it (wherein " those of *Gaul* were expresly included, and for any thing " appears, all the Churches of *Europe*) and from the Com- " munion of these the *Asiatick* Bishops excommunicating " were themselves excluded." But that the Church in *Europe* did not universally concur, to the Condemnation of *Montanus*, appears further from what is said by the same Author of *Proculus* or *Proclus* at *Rome*. " This *Proclus* was " a Writer for the *Montanists*, of a very great Esteem, and " placed in the same Rank with *Justin Martyr* and *Irenæus*, " among the Christian Apologists; he was had in Reputa- " tion, even among those that were contrary to him, and " this, after he had held a publick famous Disputation up- " on this very Point, with *Caius* a Priest of the Church at " *Rome*. And as to those who adhered to him, they were " the most numerous, and had Persons of the best Sense and " Learning among them, as well as of the best Quality of " all (the inspir'd Societies or Churches) the *Montanists*." Wherefore, supposing that from these Things, it is sufficiently evident, that the Condemnation and Excommunication was not universally at that Time, approved by the Church in *Europe*, any more than that of *Asia*, we now proceed to examine, whether it was otherwise in *Africa*.

Thirdly, The Historian says, " they had their Assemblies " and Synaxes (or Convocations) different from those of " the *Catholicks*, which appears clearly enough in *Tertulli- " an*, and that as early as the Year 192. within which, no " Doubt, *Africa* was included; for in that Part of the " World, the *Montanists* had their Churches and Bishops, " from about the Beginning of the Third Century, and it " does not any wise appear, that they were here in this " Age ever condemn'd by any Council, as in *Asia*. In-

" deed

" deed that great Man Biſhop *Pierſon* is clearly of Opini-
" on, that in *Africa* there were abundance of Perſons ad-
" hering to *Montanus*'s Revelations, who continued never-
" theleſs in the Church, and he ſpeaks of it too as a Mat-
" ter certain and well known. And this is undeniable, that
" the *Montaniſts* had for a long while, a very conſiderable
" Intereſt in this Part of the World; and this is certain,
" that there were no ſuch publick Conteſtations here as in
" *Aſia*; but the Writings both of *Proculus* and *Tertullian*,
" tho' they were *Africans*, and known to plead the Cauſe of
" *Montanus*, were ſo far from being here prohibited, that they
" were *generally read with Eſteem by thoſe whoſe Orthodoxy was*
" *unſuſpected*, nay, tho' *Proclus* or *Proculus* was an eminent
" Prophet himſelf; for of this Name, it ſeems, there were
" two very renowned of the *Montaniſt* Party; *this*, in *Af-*
" *rica*, who was acquainted with *Tertullian*, the *other*, a
" *Greek*, who defended their Cauſe at *Rome*. And of the
" *African* and his Followers, we may underſtand what *Pa-*
" *cian* ſays, that *they were the moſt noble of all the Phrygians.*
" So far was it from the Caſe, that either he or *Tertullian*,
" were driven out of Communion with the Churches in
" *Africa*, that they on the contrary maintained and preſer-
" ved a conſiderable Intereſt with the Clergy, as well as
" People. However, that thoſe of the *Montaniſt* Principles
" had in this Time, Meetings for Propheſying, appears by
" that Place, whereing *Tertullian* mentions a Siſter that had
" Revelations in the publick Aſſembly; and in his *Preſcrip-*
" *tions againſt Hereſy*, he ſpeaks of a certain Teacher, gift-
" ed with the Inſpir'd Grace of Knowledge."

What has been cited above, does fully prove, that the Condemnation and Excommunication of the Spirit in thoſe Prophets, by ſome Biſhops in *Phrygia* and *Thrace*, was far from having the Conſent of the then Church univerſal, there being manifeſt Oppoſitions to it, in all Parts of the Chriſtian World. On the contrary we here ſee, that many of the moſt famed and principal Churches of *Chriſtendom*, did openly enter their Proteſtations againſt the Cenſure, as unduly paſſed. In which Proof we thought it but fit to be the more large, becauſe the Words, *Catholick*, *the Church*, and *the Orthodox*, are Terms which commonly are receiv'd among Men, to include an Authority, that ought to be concluſive in every Point, wherein the ſame are uſed: Whereas it is plain, that the chief Advocates in this Juncture, for the Liberty of Propheſying, had equal Right with their Oppoſers, to uſe the ſaid Terms, and actually did ſo. But

I shall now conclude upon this first Article, whereon the Prophets in *Asia*, were condem'd, and not be so prolix upon any other of them, adding here but a few Words out of a late Author's Tract, entitled, *The Critical History of the Apostle's Creed.* "The Expression, says he, *Catholick Church*, "must necessarily be understood of the Universal Church, "comprehending within its Bounds, the visible Professors "of the Christian Religion, owning the Doctrine deli-"ver'd by our Saviour and his Apostles, throughout the "whole World; who tho' necessarily divided into many "separate Congregations, and particular Churches, yet "compose but that one general Church, which is affirm-"ed in the Creed to be, *One, Holy, and Catholick.* One, as "to her Faith and Doctrine, One as to her Love and "Charity: For the Unity of the Church universal, besides "that of Faith, included the Communion of Love and "Concord between her particular Members and Church-"es; insomuch that the universal Church agrees, as to "the Execution of Ecclesiastical Government, that what-"soever is *justly determined* in one Church, is not thwarted "and contradicted by another. Therefore, the Fathers, "in their Disputes against Hereticks, made frequent Re-"ferences unto the Faith and Doctrine of the Church, "which Method is frequently used by *Tertullian*, in whose "Works is *the first mention* of this Clause, *I believe the Ho-"ly Catholick Church*, as an Article of the Creed (which "was afterwards put into it) particularly in his Book of "*Prescriptions against Hereticks*, he several Times refers his "Readers to the Faith receiv'd in *the Church*, and admo-"nishes them to reject as Lies, whatsoever Doctrines were "contrary to the Truth of the Churches, so united." Wherefore, it could not be, that the Cause of the *Montanists* or Prophets condemn'd, which he pleaded strenuously for, was included within that Denomination of Things, by his own Confession to be rejected as Lies. Thus then, we proceed to

ARTICLE II.

The Spirit of these Prophets could not be *the Spirit that was in the Apostles of Christ, because it could not bring the least Proof of its having been communicated from the said Apostles, or from any Persons that had receiv'd it from them.*

Answer. As in the former Article, there was a general Doctrine included, which upon Examination was found

to

to be, oppoſed to the Scripture Rule, for judging of Prophecy; ſo in this, there is openly expreſſed, an other general Rule, whereon to determine touching the ſacred Authority of the Spirit, which is nevertheleſs plainly Anti-ſcriptural; for, without concerning our ſelves, in behalf of *Montanus*, to whom and others, the ſame was applied at that time; we ſay from the Authority of the Holy Writ, that a prophetick Spirit might then, and may at any time be the ſame, which was in the Apoſtles of Chriſt, tho' it were not communicated to the Perſon, from any who had it from them. And we prove it thus,

The Spirit is inviſible, and never was derived from any Man, but coming down from the one and only Father of Spirits, doth paſs as the Wind imperceptibly, dealing our Himſelf to every one ſeverally, as he pleaſeth. The Spirit prophetick on *Eldad* and *Medad* was nevertheleſs the ſame, with that on *Moſes*, tho' not the leaſt Proof could be brought that it was comunicated from him. During the Hiſtories of *Joſhua* and the *Judges*, there were many on whom the Spirit of Prophecy fell, without being derived or communicated from any Man whatſoever. The Spirit on *Samuel*, was not derived from *Ely*; nor is there one Inſtance in the Old Teſtament of a Prophet, conſtituted ſuch by the lineal Deſcendants from *Aaron*, who had himſelf the ſame Spirit. The Spirit is Self-originate, and every Perſon, Man or Woman, propheſying, ever did ſo, by a Commiſſion, immediate from him, and not from the Agency of any other Man. The Spirit on *Elijah* was the ſame, as that on *David*, altho' neither *Solomon* his Son, nor *Elijah*, had it from *David*, or receiv'd it from any that had it from *David*. The Spirit on *Malachi* was the ſame, that was on *Iſaiah* tho' no ways communicated from *Iſaiah*. In like Manner, that on *Daniel* the ſame with the Spirit on *Jeremiah*, tho' not derived from him. We might name all the reſt of the Prophets of the Old Teſtament, for Proof that the Concluſion of the Biſhops of *Aſia* was herein anti-ſcriptural.

The Spirit of Prophecy on *Anna*, *Mary*, *Elizabeth*, and *John Baptiſt*, was the ſame with that on *Malachi*, tho' neither communicated from any who had it from *Malachi*, or from *Zachariah* the Father of *John*. The whole Hundred and Twenty Men and Women receiv'd the Holy Ghoſt at *Pentecoſt* immediately from Heaven, and not from the Eleven Apoſtles commiſſion'd by our Saviour, and having the Spirit in his Life time. The Stile of Apoſtles is not to be reſtrain'd to the Twelve, as we have elſewhere prov'd; and

and therefore any Inſtrumentality in the Goſpel Miniſtration of the Spirit, is not to be limitted to them; the Inſtrumentality in this Caſe of any Man, was never declared by the Goſpel Conſtitution, neceſſary in it ſelf at all, not either from the Men or Women of the firſt Aſſembly at *Pentecoſt*. Thus therefore *Cornelius*, by a Viſion enjoys a Divine Manifeſtation prophetick, before his Converſion to Chriſtianity, from the ſame Spirit that vouchſafed the like to the Prophets. And when *Peter* did but begin to ſpeak, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all thoſe aſſembled with *Cornelius*, tho' *Gentiles*, unconverted to Chriſtianity and unbaptiz'd; and St. *Peter* reciting the Account of it, *Acts* xi. 15--17. ſays it fell on them, as on the Hundred and Twenty at the beginning, that is, without any Communication human, but God gave it them immediately from Himſelf, and particularly not from *Peter*, for ſays he, *what was I, that I could withſtand God?*

Again alſo, *Ananias* a Diſciple at *Damaſcus*, being by the Lord immediately commiſſioned in a Viſion, and not by any Communication we know of, from the Apoſtles, went to *Saul*, and ſaid, *the Lord Jeſus hath ſent me, that thou mighteſt receive thy Sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghoſt.* And in like Manner, as *Ananias* had his Commiſſion immediately from Heaven, ſo had *Paul* himſelf, his alſo, from the Lord Jeſus directly, who ſaid, *Acts* xxvi. 16-18. *I have appear'd unto thee for this purpoſe, to make thee a Miniſter unto the Gentiles, unto whom now I ſend thee, to open their Eyes, and turn them from Darkneſs to Light.* There are many other Prophets mention'd in the New Teſtament, concerning whom we have not the leaſt Proof, that the Spirit on them was communicated from the Apoſtles. Therefore, upon all theſe Grounds, the Spirit on *Montanus*, and others, might be the ſame that was on *Hoſea*, *Iſaiah*, *Habukkuk*, *Malachi*, *Mary*, *Anna*, *Elizabeth*, *Zechariah*, *John Baptiſt*, the whole Number at *Pentecoſt*, *Cornelius* and his Friends, *Ananias*, St. *Paul* and others, altho' it was not communicated from the Twelve Apoſtles. But neither from the Old or New Teſtament is it neceſſary at all, that the Prophetick Spirit muſt be receiv'd from any Succeſſion; it ſuffices, that the Word of the Lord does come to ſuch or ſuch, and that they receive it not from Man, nor are any ways taught it, but by the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt. Wherefore in reſpect to the Homage owing from us, to our ſole ſovereign High-prieſt, great Prophet, Lord and King of his Church, we renounce the Uſurpation on this Article of the

the confederate *Aſiatick* Biſhops and of all others, who have or ſhall by their Example, teach any Doctrine as this is, deſtructive of the Authority of the prophetick Word in Scripture.

ARTICLE III.

The Cataphrygian *Spirit could not be the Spirit of* the Apoſtles, *and conſequently not of Chriſt, while it pretended to greater Prerogatives, than* thoſe *ever enjoyed, or could lay claim to, by Virtue of the Promiſe of their Lord.*

Anſwer. If there be any general Propoſition, contain'd in this Article, it muſt be this; that when ever any Spirit ſhall claim greater Prerogatives, by a Prophet, than the Apoſtles did enjoy, conſequently the ſame cannot be the Spirit of Chriſt; in which Concluſion, whoever will preſume to make it, there may be an unjuſtifiable Raſhneſs, if the Words of our Lord Himſelf be duly conſider'd, Rev. ii. 26, 27. *He that overcometh and keepeth my Words unto the End, to him will I give power over the Nations, and he ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron, even as I have receiv'd of my Father.* But having barely mention'd this, only to ſhew how little it becomes any ſort of Men, to dogmatize in the deep things of God, which no Man knoweth, and are not to be judged of, before the time, the ſole Searcher of them does make the ſame manifeſt. What we have to do, on the Occaſion of this Article, is to look into the Application thereof, whether right or not; and herein, becauſe it is not unprofitable to examine, whether the Temper of thoſe who paſſed the Sentence, did ſhew it ſelf to be equitable, or not, and becauſe the Union of the Church Catholick is built upon Charity, as well as Agreement in Faith; we ſhall endeavour to ſee whether there was that Charity in the Catholicks, which thinketh no evil of others, but what is apparent. Now then, we take it for granted, that

Before any Sort of Concluſion can be drawn from a Fact, the Fact it ſelf ought to be firſt clearly proved; the Fact aſſerted in this Article is, that the Spirit in *Montanus* and others, claimed greater Prerogatives, than the Spirit in the Apoſtles. In this Caſe therefore the Biſhops of *Aſia*, ought to have given ſome Inſtances expreſly, wherein the Spirit ſentenced by them for Diabolical, did claim Prerogatives above That in the Apoſtles; but nothing at all appears, of their proving any ſuch, or even attempting to prove any thing like it. What ſhall we do then? We are left of Neceſſity, either to ſay, the Imputation in this Article on the

Spirit

Spirit in *Montanus*, was meerly fictitious and a Slander like to ſeveral others own'd, by the Hiſtory of *Montaniſm* to have been purpoſely caſt upon the excomunicated, leſt the Sentence of the Church, ſhould be judged to have paſſed without ſufficient Ground; or elſe we muſt gueſs at ſomething, which the ſaid Biſhops meant by this Imputation, and which for ſecret Reaſons, they were loth to ſpeak out.

I am willing to give the Reader the fulleſt Light poſſible for me, into theſe Myſterious Eccleſiaſtical Proceedings, and I know nothing that can properly belong to this Article, but what is told us from *Tertullian*, by the Advocate of theſe Biſhops, *p.* 232. " that excepting the Rule of Faith, " which is unmoveable and immutable, and whereto no- " thing is to be added, or any thing in it to be varied, " Manners and Cuſtoms may be reformed and changed, " according as Occaſion may be. And this is that (*viz.* " the altering of Manners and Cuſtoms) which the Holy " Ghoſt had done by the Miniſtry of *Montanus*." Now, we are left to conſider, whether this could poſſibly be, the aſſuming a greater Prerogative, than the Holy Ghoſt had done in the Apoſtles, by aboliſhing the Political and Ceremonial Laws of the *Jews*, and abſolving them, and all Chriſtians from their Obligation to ſuch, tho' theſe Laws had been commanded by God Himſelf; as if to be perpetual.

But let us hear what our Author ſays, in Defence of his Catholick Biſhops, the *Apollinarians*, on this Head; " the " *Montaniſts*, obſerved a moſt ſtrict and auſtere *Diſcipline*, " in Mortifications and Faſting, exceeding all that were not " of their Party; they were Zealous above moſt, for the " Traditions of the Elders, and they would not innovate " in old Cuſtoms, or ſuffer any thing to be taken away, " but choſe rather to add thereto, from the Inſpirations of " the Spirit among them. By the Means of which Spirit " they eſtabliſh'd certain Rules and Orders, among them- " ſelves. Among which Rules and Orders there were ſome " for the Manner of Faſting, and of Abſtinence. Now, " the Catholicks did anathematize the *ſaid Diſcipline* of " the *Montaniſts*, not upon the Ground of its being in it " ſelf evil or unlawful, but becauſe it was given upon the " Authority of Prophecy; for had they not went upon the " Authority of a Spirit, but upon the publick Authority of " the Church, 'tis more than probable, they had not been " condemn'd for the Uſe of it. The reaſon therefore, of " their Condemnation, was the ſubmitting to a Spirit of

" Revelation, but without the Authority of the true Gover-
" nors of the Church, ſitting in the Chair of Chriſt and
" his Apoſtles."

Wherefore by this Account we find, that if the Prerogatives charged in this Article, to be claim'd above the Apoſtles, conſiſted in the impoſing of theſe Orders and Rules forementionꝰd, then the Catholick Biſhops might have claim'd them, and all would have been well. But the Spirit the *Paracleet*, whoſe Office is to teſtifie of Chriſt, to abide with the Church in his ſtead, and to teach, guide and fill up the Place, of our Sovereign Lord and Maſter, and to command in his Name; he muſt do nothing without leave of the *Apollinarians*: For ſays the Author, *p.* 235. *The fundamental Error in* Tertullian (and the reſt) *was a too forward Zeal for ſomewhat extraordinary in Religion, before it was ſufficiently authoriz'd by the Church.*

We have proved under the firſt Article, that the Biſhops of *Aſia*, had no Right to aſſume and appropriate to themſelves, the Stile of the Church. We ſhall therefore here ſuppoſe, that the Churches diſallowing the Sentence paſſed, and owning the Inſpiration of *Montanus*, might on the Subject of this Article, plead, to this Effect, " Wherever ye
" mention the publick Authority of the Church, we think our
" ſelves equally with ye, bound to vindicate it: Now there
" is no Priviledge wherewith the Myſtical Body of Chriſt is
" more ſignally favour'd, than that of his own gracious Pre-
" ſence with us, by the Spirit of Prophecy, which is as it
" were the very Soul of that Body: Wherefore if He our
" Sovereign Lord and Maſter, be thereby manifeſtly pre-
" ſent with us, it ſeems ſtrange Doctrine to us, to hear
" of any Body ſetting themſelves up in the Chair of Chriſt,
" and oppoſingly aſſuming an Authority in the Church, a-
" bove God, therein ſpeaking by the Prophets. As to
" your ſelves, ye do not pretend to be veſted with the ex-
" traordinary Graces of the Spirit, and as to your other
" Pretentions, Brethren, they ſhall be conſider'd and diſ-
" cuſſed upon a proper Occaſion. But for the Point be-
" fore us in this Article, ye do not give the leaſt Manner
" of Proof, that the *Montaniſts* are guilty of aſſuming high-
" er Prerogatives than the Apoſtles; and yet ye condemn
" them for doing ſo. God forbid, that ye ſhould continue,
" obſtinate in ſuch a crying Injuſtice; but if ye will conti-
" nue ſo abſurdly wicked, and unreaſonable Men; we ſhall
" not ceaſe Prayer, that the Church may be deliver'd from
" you, and that notwithſtanding your Oppoſition, the Word
" of

" of the Lord may have free Courſe, and ſtill be glorified " in the Church, 2 *Theſ.* iii. 1, 2.

ARTICLE. IV.

This could not be that Spirit, which it pretended to be, becauſe it wanted the Marks *of the true Prophetical and Apoſtolical Spirit; and was not able to give that Demonſtration* to others, *which the Apoſtles and Prophets gave to the Truth of their Meſſage, or indeed* any Demonſtration at all.

Anſwer. The *Hiſtorian* of Facts, *p.* 112. and 113. reports them thus, " The Spirit in *Montanus* and others, does near- " ly imitate moſt, if not all, the Properties of the True " Divine Spirit. It is difficult for many ſerious and ſincere " Chriſtians, to diſcern what Manner of Spirit it is, that " preſſes to ſo much Holineſs, and rebukes Vice ſo open- " ly and powerfully. Wherefore ſome think, that the " Devil cannot well be ſuppoſed, ſo much out of his Wits, " as to preach at that Rate, againſt himſelf and his own " Intereſt. Moreover the Spirit of *Montanus* reſembles " much the Spirit of God, in effectually working, accor- " ding to his Exhortations, ſuch outward Fruits, as are " nearly like to thoſe, that are called, *the Fruits of the Spi- " rit*, in Oppoſition to the Works of the Fleſh. And, that " this Spirit alſo, may ſeem to be, even a Diſcerner of the " Secrets of the Heart, as well as an utter Enemy to all " Iniquity; he does publick in their Aſſemblies for pro- " phelying, make one or other of the Inſpir'd, reprove " ſome preſent for their Faults, which were not known. " However, who can tell the Depths of Satan? And we " cannot think there is any Demonſtration, in this Caſe."

To this, the other Churches who own'd their Inſpirations, rejoin. *Firſt*, ye ſay, the Spirit in *Montanus* does nearly intimate, *moſt*, if not *all* the Properties, of the True Divine Spirit inſpiring; and then, ye condemn him as an evil One, for Diſability to give any Demonſtration at all. We cannot reconcile theſe things; we think ye have confuted and diſproved your own Accuſation of the *Montaniſts*, ſo that from your own Confeſſion they ought to be acquitted and receiv'd into Communion, that the Church may be comforted and edified by them. But if ye continue, thus to make War, upon the Teſtimony of a Spirit, that has in him, moſt, if not all, the Properties of the Deity, may ye not irrecoverably fall into the Depths of Satan, by *belying the Lord, whilſt ye ſay, it is not he*, as in *Jer.* v. 12.

We cannot perceive, but by your own Acknowledgment, there is the ſame *Demonſtration* upon *Montanus* of the true Spirit of Chriſt, which was upon St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4. We beſeech ye therefore, by the Bowels of Chriſt, and for the Love of the Spirit's Sake, tell us, dear Brethren, what is the Demonſtration of the Spirit of Chriſt ye inſiſt upon, and which *Montanus* wanted? For beſides all the above-mention'd Evidences, ye own, *p.* 77, that he alſo *wrought Signs and Wonders.*

We do not (ſay the *Apollinarians*) mean that he wanted the latter, for they were to us no Demonſtration at all, becauſe *theſe may be wrought by the Devil transformed, as well as by the Operation of God.* Indeed we deſire to be excus'd, from giving any Definition, of what can or ought to demonſtrate a Prophet, or beaccounted for Marks deciſive of it, for we do not think, that there is any need of Prophets at all; on the contrary, 'tis more for the Advantage of the ſtated Miniſtry certainly, to be without them, nay, and more tending to the advancing of Unity and Peace in the Church too, as our *Miltiades* has made appear: For whilſt the Induction of Men into the publick Miniſtry, is not allowed to paſs without the Sanction of the Spirit, declared by the Prophets, there is not that Encouragement for all Sorts of Learning and Philoſophy, whereby we are to plead with Unbelievers, as otherwiſe will be. And whilſt the Spirit of Prophecy ſtands in Eſteem for the beſt Interpreter of the Scriptures, there cannot be that juſt Regard to human Study, Oratory, and Elocution, that is due to it, and would make our Miniſterial Function duly honourable among the People: And moreover, this Cuſtom of having the Spirit of Prophecy to be judged only by thoſe, who themſelves poſſeſs the moſt diſtinguiſhing of his extraordinary Gifts, is highly prejudicial to the Biſhop's Authority. In Fine, all theſe Things together, do neceſſarily break the Peace of the Church; for we find, that whilſt ſome Churches enjoy thoſe diſtinguiſhing Gifts, and others are without them, the former are apt to deſpiſe the latter; and theſe can very hardly without an evil Eye bear that Contempt; and thus Emulation and Diſſentions ariſe. We think it therefore, Brethren, upon all theſe Accounts, that it is better for the Honour of the Clergy, and the Welfare of the People alſo, to reſtrain and ſuppreſs the Liberty of Propheſying, which breeds ſo much Diſorder, than to ſubject our ſelves to his Superintendency, and Reproofs of Correction. But in particular, as to this Spirit of *Montanus* and others, it is plain, he

he could not demonſtrate himſelf to *Zoticus* of *Comanum*, and *Julian* of *Apamia*, therefore our Preſident *Apollinaris*, Biſhop of *Hierapolis*, cannot believe it, the Spirit of God Almighty, and we ſubſcribe to his Determination.

As to your prudential Reaſoning, ſay the other Churches, we take it, Brethren, to concern Matters which are not properly under our Direction, for Chriſt alone is Lord of his Church: He alone is Moderator, Umpire and Rector thereof, in all Points. He has glorified his Name, in beſtowing Heavenly Gifts unto Men, and given us luminous Teſtimonies of his Preſence with us, ſo that all the Idol-Gods of the Heathen do daily bow down, and are broken by his Sovereign Power. The prophetical Word of the Lord has hitherto planted and edified the Church, and enlarged her Borders, and guarded her diſtinct Communions and their Diſcipline, with ſuch mighty Demonſtrations of his Power, that neither any of the openly vicious, no, nor the ſecret Hypocrite, can abide ſafely in them. Shall we now therefore, ſo much as enter into Debate, about any Parts of the Conſtitution of his Church? Far be it from us! As to the Honour of the Clergy, we are content to leave that, under the Definition our Saviour gave us of it ſaying, *he that would be greateſt among you, let him become the leaſt of all, and the Servant of all*; for if He our Lord and Maſter came not to be miniſter'd unto, but to miniſter or ſerve, let us alſo not ſeek our own, but the Things of Jeſus Chriſt, leaving of to provoke one another, envying and grudging againſt one another. We ſhall not therefore, ſo much as enter into a full Diſcuſſion, of your prudential Reaſonings, about the Expedience of Prophecy in general leaſt we ſhould thereby draw into Queſtion, the Wiſdom of him, whoſe Church and Houſhold we are; we ſhould have been glad to have heard from you, what were *the Marks of the true prophetical Spirit*, that are wanting in *Montanus*; but ſince ye are willingly ſilent on that Head, and have only inſtanced in, his not being able to give Demonſtration of his being ſo, unto *Zoticus*, *Julian* and *Apollinaris*; we conceive the *Jewiſh* Prieſts might upon this Principle, equally with as much Juſtice as ye, have maintain d and with more too, that moſt of the Prophets, God ſent to them, were poſſeſſed by the Devil; for it is apparent, that the Spirit on thoſe Prophets did not convince the *Jewiſh* Doctors, any more than that of *Montanus* does, *Zoticus* of *Comanum*, and *Julian* of *Apamia*. Wherefore, take heed, Brethren, that ye deal not *treacherouſly againſt the Lord*, Jer.

v. 11. Take heed, that ye be not, by ſuch preſumptuous dictating to the Spirit, ſetting the Briars and Thorns againſt God in Battle, *Iſa.* 27. 4. for, if it be only the childlike, the weaned from the Milk, and drawn from the Breaſts, that can be taught Knowledge, and made to underſtand *Doctrine*, or [*Heb.* the hearing of the Prophet,] *Iſa.* xxviii. 9. We fear, ye may go, and fall backward, and be broken, and ſnared, and taken, by theſe Rules of your making, *ver.* 13.

ARTICLE V.

The Spirit of Montanus *and* his Apoſtles, *was not the Spirit of Chriſt and His, becauſe inſtead of removing the heavy Burthen of Legal Obſervances, it was ſtill for making it more heavy.*

Anſwer. " There was certain Names of Contempt, gi-
" ven them by others, as all thoſe were, that were derived
" from their Leaders, Men or Women. But the Perſons
" herein meant, did all with one Accord conſent, to diſown
" every ſuch Name, as diſtinguiſhed them by their Leaders.
" And therefore, they called themſelves all, by the one
" Name of *the Inſpir'd*, as thoſe who had receiv'd the Ho-
" ly Spirit, who alone was to lead them."

The Spirit who thus lead them, is herein charged with making heavier the Burden of Legal Obſervances, inſtead of removing it. Now, I have read over the Author of this Hiſtory ſeveral Times, and upon this very Head, have ſearched it anew, and muſt do Juſtice to the Catholicks in owning, I do not find one Legal Obſervance, retained in the Chriſtian Church; therefore, I know not what is meant by the Words, *making heavier the Burden of Legal Obſervances.* And ſeeing the Subject of this Accuſation, carries no Diſtinction, at leaſt no intelligible one to me, if it refers to the Third Article, or to the following one, it is there anſwer'd. But if at any Time, what has now eſcaped me, ſhould appear, that is, that the Spirit of *Montanus*, did declare for retaining the Burthen of Legal Obſervances, and much more if he made it heavier, I grant it was not the Spirit of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, that did ſo. In the mean Time, where there is publick Defamation, authorized under the Name of the *Church*, it ſeems a Contradiction to the Adjunct of *Holy*, which the Apoſtle's Creed gives, to denominate that Catholick Church which we are to believe.

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ARTICLE. VI.

The Spirit of Montanus, Maximilla *and* Priſcilla, *was a Diabolical Spirit of Impoſture, in their pretending to a higher Degree of Purity, Saintſhip and Abſtraction, than all other Chriſtians.*

Anſwer. We are now enquiring into the Cauſes of theſe Perſons inſpired being excomunicated; and it ſeems, one of the principal Grounds, whereon the Biſhops of *Aſia* proceeded in that Cenſure, was; that it muſt be a diabolical Spirit, that pretended to a higher Degree of Sanctity, than they and their Congregations had, by whom the *Montaniſts* were excommunicated: For as to all outward Appearances of that Sanctity, and ſuch Evidences as muſt prove the Reality of it, the Hiſtory of *Montaniſm* (in the Chapters that treat of their Morality and Diſcipline, and elſewhere) does abundantly declare, that the Lives of theſe *Montaniſts* were no other, than like to thoſe of the firſt Converts to Chriſtianity, ſcrewed up to the higheſt Pitch; neither do the Words of this Article contradict it. Even in this they are not ſo much as charged with the Opinion, of a ſinleſs Perfection, but (in the Words of the Author) "with ſtick-"ing cloſe to the Letter of the Goſpel, in its very ſevereſt "Precepts, without admitting of any *Limitations or Exceptions*, from human Commentaries; and ſo, they muſt "have been by their Principles, for preſſing not only the "Precepts of the Decalogue, and the Law of Nature, but "muſt have carried the Law *of Grace in Jeſus Chriſt* further "than any had ever done before them; or at leaſt none did "more extol his Merits; and if they added any Peculia-"rities of their own, theſe could not be taxed with being "evil, further than as commanded by, and done in Obe-"dience to the Spirit, without an Eſtabliſhment by Autho-"rity of the Church Governors.

What Guilt there was therefore, contained in the Import of this Article, I leave to the Conſideration of thoſe, who can penetrate fully into the Myſtery of Iniquity, and ſo may be able to comprehend the Proof of a Diabolical Spirit, from the higher Degree of Holineſs it effected, than any other Chriſtians had.

ARTICLE. VII.

They indulged themſelves in Feaſting and Gluttony, and dyed their Hair, and blacken'd their Eyes, and Painted their Faces, and affected fine Clothes, and played at Tables and Dice.

Answer. In this and the foregoing Article, we have some thing of a Parallel, to what was among the *Jewish* Priests, who always oppoſed the Holy Ghoſt; for when *John* came neither eating Bread, nor drinking Wine, they ſaid he had a Devil, tho' among the People all Men held him for a Prophet. And on the contrary, when our Redeemer came both eating and drinking like other Men, they then objected, that he was a gluttonous Man and a Wine-bibber. Which Manner of Conduct diſcovers ſuch a Propenſity to reject the true Meſſengers of God, that rather then want a Plea for it; they could even ſit down content, with alledging the very doing, or the omitting the ſame Action (tho' on both ſides of an indifferent Nature in it ſelf, and neither one Way or the other diſtinguiſhing in the Point) to be an Excuſe ſufficient for them in the Caſe of a Propher. And now tho' this ſort of Reaſoning, could never be allowed upon any other Occaſion, yet the Biſhops of *Aſia* ſeem yet to have been more abſur'd therein than the *Jews*, becauſe they apply the ſame contradiction in Argument to the very ſelf ſame Perſons, whereas the *Jews* applied it differently, to two who were diſtinct, the one from the other The Senſeleſneſs of the *Jews*, in their contradictory Cenſure of him and *John Baptiſt*, is by our Saviour compared to the trifling of Children in their Play; and St. *James* tells us, no Fountain can yield both Salt Water and Freſh at the ſame time, *chap.* iii. 12. Thus alſo the Rejectors of the Word of the Lord, tho they called themſelves Wiſe, are upbraided, *Jer.* viii. 7, 9. with being more ſenſeleſs, than the Stork, the Turtle, the Crane, the Swallow, nay than the ſtupid Ox and the dull Aſs. But for the Caſe in Hand, can any thing be more unaccountable and unintelligible, than to hear it imputed to the *Montaniſts*, at one and the ſame time? That they obſerved the moſt ſtrict and auſtere Diſcipline, in Mortifications and Faſtings, and that the Spirit in them produced ſuch Fruits, as were directly oppoſed to the Works of the Fleſh, and yet that the ſame Perſons indulged themſelves in Feaſting, Gluttony and the like. But let the Matter hang together as it will, the Fact is related thus by Dr. *Hicks*, " *Montanus* was addicted to great " Mortifications and Abſtractions, for the purifying of the " Soul, eſpecially in Faſting and Abſtinence: This *Reformer* " was followed by *Maximilla* and *Priſcilla*, in Abſtinence " from all the Luſts of the Fleſh, that they might be the fitter for Organs and Veſſels of the Holy Spirit; and upon " the whole it muſt be owned, that their Lives were outwardly

" wardly Holy and Blameleſs, which drew after them " great Numbers. The Morals deſcribed in the Writings " of *Tertullian*, are no other than thoſe of the firſt *Monta-* " *niſts*, importing even the Perfection of Chriſtian Mora- " lity, for they pretended to take the Life of Chriſt, for " the Model of all that they were to do. Their penitential " Diſcipline before Baptiſm, conſiſted in long Watchings, " Faſtings, and Prayers, for without Mortification preceed- " ing, they held Baptiſm ineffectual; for they laid down " this Maxim, that the Baptiſm of the Heart muſt always " prepare for that of the Body; and after Baptiſm, the " Diſcipline of the *Montaniſts* in all the Parts of it, was " extreamly rigorous, particularly as to eating and drink- " ing; and indeed they declared themſelves utter Enemies " of all the Pleaſures of Senſe. They were profeſſed Ene- " mies alſo to all Superfluities, both in Aparrel and in the " Furniture of the Houſe, and were for having all ſold, " and diſtributed to pious and charitable Uſes. The Ha- " bits both of their Men and Women, ſeem to have been " exceeding plain, except perhaps upon ſome great and " feſtival Appearances. Nevertheleſs, *if all that is told us*, " by thoſe who wrote profeſſedly againſt them *were true*, " they muſt have had a Morality exceeding looſe and ſcan- " dalous, for the Chiefs of the Inſpired are all painted out " in very black Characters by ſome or other. Thus *Mon-* " *tanus*, *Priſcilla* and *Maximilla*, are deſcribed to be Per- " ſons, who conformed themſelves to the Vanities and " Modes of the World, in Apparel, Dreſs, and Equipage, " as perfect Courtiers, to paint the Face, colour the Eye- " brows and Hair, perfume the Head, play at Tables and " Dice; in a Word, that under the Mask of Godlineſs, " they were defiled with all Manner of Impurities and " Abominations, who denied themſelves nothing in pri- " vate, and were guilty of Scandalous Practices in ſecret; " and laſtly, as if under the Notion of greater Spirituality, " they were confederated only to work more ſecurely the " Works of the Fleſh. However we can ſay but little to " theſe Charges upon them, which depend not only upon " the Veracity and Impartiality of the ſingle Writing of " *Apollonius*, but alſo upon the Truth and Fairneſs of the " Accounts tranſmitted to him. And altho' *Apollonius* is " by ſome accounted no better than *a meer Libeller*, yet he " appears to have been too good a Chriſtian, to have been " guilty of any wilful Miſrepreſentation of Fact; but it " is not impoſſible, but he may have been ſomewhat too

" eaſie

" eaſie in giving Credit to, and in relating after others,
" Relations not ſufficiently examined and atteſted. But
" after he had given an Account of ſuch Reports as theſe,
" concerning *Montanus* and thoſe that adhered to him, he
" makes this modeſt and judicious Concluſion, *viz. as for us,*
" *we are of Opinion that we can know nothing of theſe Matters,*
" *but what we have ſeen with our own Eyes* (but as to the Re-
" ports above ſpecified, he did not pretend to have ſeen
" them himſelf) it may be then ſays the Hiſtorian, theſe
" things were ſo, or it may be not: But whether all this
" was meerly an hypocritical Form, or whatever elſe it
" might poſſibly be, thus much at leaſt is certain, that the
" Principles of their Morality had nothing looſe in them,
" but on the contrary were rather too rigid and ſevere.
" And as to the Book of *Apollonius*, *Tertullian* is ſaid to
" have written an Anſwer to it, in which he undertook to
" clear his Friend *Montanus*, and the Chiefs of that Party,
" of all that had been charged againſt him, or them.

ARTICLE. VIII.

It was not to be thought, that any, who were the Prophets and Meſſengers of the true God, would either give, or take Bribes, as ſome of theſe did.

Anſwer. Among the other Imputations which *Apollonius* caſt upon the *Montaniſt* Leaders, this alſo of taking and giving Bribes, was One. And we muſt acknowledge that it might be a very conſiderable Piece of Service, he therein did for the Party, which had condemn'd them, becauſe Perſons excommunicated ought not in all Prudence, be ſuffered to be reputed more Holy, than the Biſhops condemning. Nevertheleſs, be it on which ſide ſoever let Truth prevail. Hear therefore firſt, the Words of *Apollonius* on this Article; " This *Montanus*, ſays he, craftily
" covered the ſordid receiving of Gifts, with the Name of
" Offerings, and gave Hire to the Preachers of his Doctrine;
" if they deny, that their Prophets do receive ſuch Gifts,
" we can prove it by a thouſand Inſtances. And do not
" you know, that *the Scripture throughout forbids a Prophet,*
" *to receive Gifts or Mony?* Let them then anſwer, and con-
" feſs, that thoſe who are convicted of receiving Mony,
" can be no Prophets."

In purſuance therefore, of this open taxing of the *Montaniſts*, before we conſider whether the ſame be lawful or not by Scripture, we ought firſt to examine the Fact it-ſelf, how far true, and how far not. And in this Matter, we

we do appeal to the *History of Montanism*, for a Decision. "*Maximilla* and *Priscilla*, says he, are charged by *Apollonius*, with suffering themselves to be bribed, and with Prophesying for Presents: But St. *Hierom*, on the contrary, "supposes them rather to bribe others. For this Father has "acquainted us, that they were both Ladies of Quality, and "exceeding rich, so that they could have no Need of acting the Propheteſſes for Hire, and no Inducement from "Worldly Considerations, to express themselves after so "strange a Manner, as they did. But we will in Charity presume, they did verily take the Spirit upon them, to "be the Divine One. It is probable therefore, that the Presents, that were made to them, were not properly addressed to them, for Rewards or Gratuities, but were given strictly to the Spirit, under the specious Name of "Offerings. After they were cut off from the Communion of the Church, they formed themselves into a distinct "Method of Societies, Communities, or Churches. After "this Constitution of theirs, the Number of their Followers surprizingly encreasing, there were voluntary Contributions and Offerings made, the Care of receiving and "gathering of which, was committed by *Montanus*, to one "*Theodotus* principally; that the same might be distributed as fit Occasions did present. As to *Priscilla* in particular, "she was honour'd by some of the highest Station in the "Church, and appeal'd to. And as she was noble and "rich, it cannot be doubted, but that with her Riches she "did a great deal of Mischief to the Church, and all this "under the Notion of Charity, as the Antients have deliver'd down to us. However, the Chiefs of the Inspir'd "are all painted out in very black Characters; and in particular *Apollonius* insists largely upon their taking *Bribes*, "and upon their Rioting and Gluttony, vain Garbs, and "such like. However, we can say but little to most of "these Charges, which depend upon the Veracity and Impartiality of this single Reporter. *Tertullian* is said to "have written an Answer to *Apollonius*, in which he undertook to clear *Montanus*, and the cheif of that Party, of those Scandals. And that this Author, however deluded, was a Person of Sincerity we cannot but conclude, as well from the Testimony of the Antients, no "Ways partial for him, as from his own undoubted remains, which give us the cleareſt Picture of his Mind, and certainly from him the Morals of the then *Montanists* "were no other, than the Morals of the very first Christians,

"even

" even ſcrewed up to the higheſt Pitch. Particularly they " were uſed to give large Alms, to viſit the Poor, the Sick, " the Impriſon'd for Chriſt's Sake, to make rich Offerings, " and even Oblations ſometimes of all they had, for the " Service of the Church. They were profeſſed Enemies to " all Superfluities, both in Apparel and Furniture of the " Houſe, and conſequently were for having it all ſold, and " diſtributed to pious and charitable Uſes. But in theſe " Charities they were not reſtrained to thoſe of their own " Party; for their Doctrine was, that they were obliged " by Chriſt to return always good for evil, and to render " all Sorts of charitable Services to their Enemies, and even " bitter Perſecutors."

Upon all this Evidence, it may well be ſuppoſed, that the Opponent Churches of *Aſia*, *Africa* and *Europe*, might reply to the *Apollinarians*; it appears to us, that ye ſeek to make valid your Sentence of Excommunication, by meer Slanders, in a Manner not becoming the Miniſters of Chriſt; as if the voluntary Offerings made in the *Montaniſt* Aſſemblies, were not in their Nature and Application, as far from *Bribes*, as thoſe cuſtomarily given in your Churches, or ours. If ye call the Miniſters Subſiſtence among them, a *Hire*, why not alſo among us and you, as properly? The Rules of St. *Paul* for our Maintenance, were they not given for ſuch Miniſters, who were then inſpir'd prophetically, and he himſelf ſometimes relieved by Contributions? Therefore *Appollonius*, like a falſe Prophet, has expreſly contradicted the Scripture, which ſays, *thoſe that wait at the Altar, are to be Partakers of the Altar*; and our very Lord Himſelf, and his Apoſtles, were ſupplied from the Subſtance of others. Thus he notoriouſly belies the Text alſo, in making it from thence, a Determination poſitive, that he cannot be a Prophet, who takes a Gift; for among others, *Joſeph*, *Daniel*, *Samuel* from *Saul*, and *Eliſha* from *Hazael*, did ſo; much more would this Reproacher of the Scriptures, have made it incompatible with a Prophet, for any one to have run in Debt, without being able to pay, as in 2 *Kings* iv. 1.

ARTICLE IX.

There was no Obligation to receive that Spirit which refuſed to be try'd according to the ſtanding Rules, both in the Jewiſh *and* Chriſtian *Church; or reaſon to think, that it could be the Spirit of Jeſus, which would by no means ſubmit to be adjured in the Name of Jeſus.*

Anſwer. The Fact by our Author is thus ſtated; " The " Church

" Church in *Asia* was rent into Pieces, for there were ſome " in the higheſt Dignities of it, who could hardly be ſup- " poſed to have any ſelfiſh or ill Deſign, who pleaded a- " gainſt reſtraining the Liberty of Propheſying, and ſo " took Part with *Montanus*, and the reſt. Thus in particu- " lar, when *Sotas*, and *ſome* of the Orthodox Clergy at- " tempted to exorciſe the Demon of *Priſcilla*, on the con- " trary, there were alſo *thoſe*, that owned her to be acted " by a true Spirit. At another Time, when the Biſhops of " leſſer *Asia*, met together to try the Spirit of *Maximilla*, " *Julias* and *Zoticus* (the latter ſtiled by *Euſebius*, *lib.* v. " *cap.* 16. *p.* 182. Biſhop of the Village of *Comanum*) con- " tended for the Right of Biſhops, as the ordinary Judges " in this Caſe: There was on the other Side, *Themiſon*, " and a Number of Perſons of Eminence, who claimed " as much Right in the Caſe, as *Julian* and *Zoticus*, and " wou'd not give her Leave, to make the Trial, crying out, " that it was to blaſpheme the Holy Ghoſt. It is urged by " *Apollonius* indeed, that the Friends of *Maximilla* wou'd " not venture the Manner of Trial by exorciſing, and per- " mitted not the Experiment to be made: But another " Author, who had well weighed this Matter. and was no " more a Friend to her, or her Party, than *Apollonius* himſelf, " could not tell what to ſay to it, when he had taken a " great deal of Pains to inform himſelf of the Truth there- " in. As to *Apollonius*, ſome will have him a little too cre- " dulous, in picking up Relations of Fact, and it is not im- " poſſible, but he may have been ſomewhat too eaſie, in re- " lating after others, Relations not ſufficiently examined " and atteſted."

As to *Apollonius*'s Evidence, ſay the Churches, we ought not to believe more of it, than he himſelf does, who tells us fairly, that we can know nothing thereof, but what we have ſeen with our own Eyes. But from what appears on other Evidence, *Maximilla* and *Priſcilla* did each of them ſeverally appear before you, and the Diſpute about exorci- ſing was between the Clergy themſelves; poſſibly ſome without the Spirit would have had the Matter decided: However, ſome did attempt to exorciſe, but in vain. Therefore, we abſolutely deny, that it ever was a ſtanding Rule, either in the *Jewiſh* or Chriſtian Church, to condemn the Spirit of Prophecy upon an Allegation, not only unpro- ved, but even ſuch an one, as the Accuſers themſelves do acquit him of.

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ARTICLE X.

The Spirit of these Prophets was not a Spirit of Martyrdom; for notwithstanding all their great Boastings and their express Declarations against the Lawfulness of retiring to avoid Persecution, none did more shamefully betray the Cause of Christianity, when they were brought to the Test.

Answer. The Spirit of Prophecy, as may be seen in the Second Part of this Treatise, had always in the Christian Church, strongly encouraged and strengthen'd Persons, to the glorious Confession of Christ in Martyrdom. Now the Spirit in *Montanus*, had in like sort strenuously moved and excited Men to the like; and by all the most powerful Motives of Injunction, Exhortation, Promise and Comination, enforced it doctrinally. This all the World knew, from the Books of *Tertullian* (who had made a Collection of their Inspirations,) and his Writings to the Effect above-mention'd, remain unto this Day, in which it appears, that if any one renounced Christ in the Hour of that great Trial, there was to be no receiving him again, into the Communion of the *Montanists*. This is what is meant in the present Article, by their express Decalrations against the Lawfulness of avoiding Persecution. It is further incontestible, that this Doctrinal Root did produce abundant Fruits, agreeable to it self. For, *Apollinaris* Bishop of *Hierapolis*, their principal Accuser, allowed the Subject of their boasting of many Martyrs to be true, and adds in *Eusebius, but as often as the Men of the Church are called to suffer Death, with the Martyrs (as they term them) of the* Phrygian *Heresy, the Catholicks do separate from them even at the Stake; which is verified in the Examples lately, of* Caius *and* Alexander *at* Apamea. This Testimony of *Apollinaris*, is indeed added, after he had asserted that the *Montanists* had no Martyrs, no, not one; but upon this Head, the Author of *Montanism* will be their Compurgator, and clear them as to the Fact; for says he also; "they assembled so publickly, and celebrated the Christian Mysteries so openly, in the Sight of the Sun, when the Edicts of the Emperors were most severe, against all Societies convening for religious Worship, contrary to the Laws; as if they even meant, to provoke and irritate hereby the Infidels; for they not only believed it was unlawful to fly in the Time of Persecution, but they *ran earnestly, many of them, to embrace Death.* In the Beginning of the Third Century, there was a Custom universal among

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" the Catholicks and *Montaniſts* equally, to offer Oblati-
" ons annually in Honour of the Martyrs; and ſo *Tertulli-*
" *an* ſhews, that they the *Montaniſts* offer'd in their Com-
" munities, Oblations every Year, in Honour of the Mar-
" tyrs among them. Even *Tertullian* himſelf is thought by
" ſome, to have died a Martyr for the Faith of Chriſt:
" *Rogino* reckons him in the Number of thoſe Witneſſes,
" who in the Perſecution of the Church, ſhed their Blood
" for the Teſtimony of Jeſus. *Rhonanus* agrees to that Ac-
" count of his Death, and in the Martyrology of *Uſuardus*,
" there is upon the 4th of *Auguſt*, mention made of the
" Paſſion of one *Tertullian*; who after having been beaten
" with Clubs, and tortured both by burning his Sides,
" and by extending his Joints upon the Rack, had his
" Head cut off, being probably above a Hundred Years
" old."

We have been told alſo, from another Hiſtorian, of the Church, and Heretick in theſe Ages; that the very Original of the Schiſm, on Occaſion of the Prophets was in Part, that the Biſhops and Elders in *Phrygia*, contrary to the former general Diſcipline among Chriſtians, did often re-admit into their Communion, the Renouncers of Chriſt in the Hour of great Tribulation, without Evidences of a ſerious Repentance for that Apoſtacy. And that *Montanus* was not only reproached, becauſe he upbraided them with the Truth of Facts paſſed, but diſliked upon the Account of his ſo violently urging the Goſpel Duty incumbent on Chriſtians, of hating their own very Lives for their Saviour's Sake, and for leading on the Way to it by many Examples of his Troop. Among others then that, were willing rather to draw back in the Heat of the Battle, and were offended therefore, with ſeeing the Enſigns of *Montanus*, planted upon the Entrenchments of the Enemy, was the noted *Apollonius*; who inſtead of ſupporting the Attack of the common Enemy of the Chriſtian Name, drew out of his Quiver an Arrow, to pierce thoſe Enſigns. The Story he tells, is this; *There was among the* Montaniſts, ſays he, *one* Alexander, *condemn'd to Death for Robbery at* Epheſus, *by the* Roman Proconſul, *who to ſave his Life, renounced Chriſt; and for an Atteſtation of the Truth of this Fact, I appeal to the publick Regiſter of that City.* Nevertheleſs, Montanus *diſown'd that he knew the ſaid Perſon, altho' they lived together ſeveral Years; and thus I at once convict the Prophet alſo of a Falſity; and if I would, I could exhibit the like of ſeveral others of them.*

" *Apol-*

" *Apollonius* indeed the Relater hereof, would have us " believe (ſays our Author) that there were a great many " others beſides that did ſo. However we can ſay but lit- " tle to it, ſeeing it depends upon the Veracity and Im- " partiality of this ſingle Witneſs, who after he had given " out an Account of ſuch Reports upon *Montanus*, and his " Adherents, makes this modeſt and judicious Concluſion, " *viz. As for us, we are of the Opinion, that we can know no-* " *thing of thoſe Matters, but what we have ſeen with our own* " *Eyes.*" Upon theſe Evidences, the Churches of *Aſia*, *Africa* and *Europe*, may well be thought, during the Debate, to reply to the *Apollinarians* thus; Ye have in this Article aſſerted, that none did more ſhamefully betray the Cauſe of Chriſtianity, when call'd to ſuffer Martyrdom than the *Montaniſts*; we are loth to inſiſt upon an odious Compariſon, for if any of your Communion have ſhamefully betrayed it, the taxing of *Montaniſts* for the ſame, does not excuſe you. We wiſh therefore, ye had, if it might have been juſtified, drawn this Article, that none but the *Montaniſts* had ſhamefully betrayed the Cauſe of Chriſtianity. Seeing therefore, the Accuſation lies only, that they did no leſs than others, ſhame Chriſtianity, it ſeems as if that they as a Communion, are to be taxed with doing ſo. Now, a Communion is then juſtly reproved, when there is any thing in its Doctrine, Diſcipline, or general Adminiſtration, that gives Room for the Subject of it: But herein, ye do acquit them by your Words in this Article, mentioning their expreſs Declarations, againſt the Lawfulneſs of retiring to avoid Perſecutions. How then is the Spirit of the Prophets among you proved, not to be a Spirit of Martyrdom, when he has authorized ſuch Doctrine and Diſcipline, and the Adminiſtration ſubſequent is well clear'd? Ye ſay, we prove it by Evidences in Fact. But where is the Demonſtration of Facts? Ye cite the ſingle Report of *Apollonius*, touching a Man, one *Alexander*, whom however *Montanus* ſays, he knew not. And *Apollonius* himſelf tells us, we can know nothing of the Certainty of his Reports, but what we have ſeen with our own Eyes. Now then, pray, Dear Brethren, do but allow your ſelves to conſider the Unfairneſs of your Proceedings, on this Point. *Apollinaris* grants, that the *Montaniſts* had many Martyrs, and yet ſays, it proved nothing however in Favour of the Spirit on them: *Apollonius* brings but one Inſtance of Apoſtacy, and ye would make this the Foundation of condemning it. In Fine, if we ſhould adhere to you, we know not how to juſtify the Cauſe of

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Christianity in general, against the Infidels; for they will confound us on one Side, with our own allowed Principles, that an Army of Martyrs proves nothing in our Favour, and on the other, they have many more Instances of Apostacy than one, to convict us upon, and so we shall be self condemn'd.

ARTICLE XI.

This Spirit was very unlike the Spirit which had appear'd in the Prophets of the New Testament, as particularly in Agabus, *the Daughters of* Philip, Melito, Quadratus, *and* Amia *of* Philadelphia; *and very like the Spirit which had appear'd in the Heathen Prophets and Priests; and particularly in the* Energumens, *who were by the Christians ordinarily dispossess'd, in the Name and Spirit of Christ.*

Answer. The Subject of this Article, does not at all relate to, either the Matter contained in Propheſying, or the Tendency and Scope thereof, or any Properties of the Spirit speaking; for, as to these, *'tis observable* (says our Author) *the Montanist Spirit did nearly imitate most, if not all, the Properties of the true Divine Spirit; and their Prophecies had an Appearance of agreeing in all things, with those in Holy Writ, only adapted to the present Time and State, in which they lived.* But the Subject of this Article solely concerns the Manner, that is, the outward visible Signs of a Spirit speaking; and even in this Case, here is no Definition expressed, what were the visible Tokens of the Spirit in *Agabus*, *Melito*, &c. or what they were in *Montanus*, or what they were in the Heathen Prophets. Wherefore between the Circumstance of very like the Heathen Prophets, and very unlike some of the Christian there named, the Conclusion against *Montanus*, is in the reason of it, to remain, in the Breast of those who condemn'd him, and an implicit Faith on them, is demanded from all the Churches. And here let us recollect, that *Miltiades* who wrote in the Controversy, before the Death of *Apollinaris*, *Anno* 180. laid it down as a firm and incontestible Position, that it was inconsistent with a true Prophet to speak in a Trance; and then consider that the Author of *Montanism*, says, *Miltiades was* therein *a Witness against* Montanus, *and against all* PRETENCES *to new Divine Revelation, that* (even Divine Revelation) *tendeth to break the Unity of the Spirit, in the Church.*

By the particularizing of the Daughters of *Philip*, *Amia*, and *Quadratus*, in this Article, who were dead long before,

there is a plain Declaration, that the *Anti-Montaniſts* owned *then* no Prophets exiſting among them: for if they had avowed any, their Argument would better have comported with a Compariſon to ſuch, rather than to thoſe who were long ago deceaſed. Which Conſideration, joined with the open Confeſſion of *Miltiades*, of writing againſt *all new Pretences to Revelation indiſtinguiſhably*, does put the Matter beyond Doubt, that the *Apollinarian* Party aimed at no leſs, than to ſuppreſs Prophecy in general, and to eſtabliſh themſelves a Church, excluſive of it; which alſo appears yet more manifeſtly, by the Poſition of *Miltiades*, in his Tract (which is cryed up by them for the beſt Book ever written on the Subject) that it is not conſiſtent with a true Prophet, to ſpeak in a Trance. For, as to Extacy, taking it to comprehend a Suppreſſion of the Senſes, either in whole, or in Part, we have largely prov'd in *Part* i. *Chap.* 6. that it was generally in Scripture, the Caſe of the Prophets. But this Confederacy in the *Apollinarians* againſt Prophecy it ſelf, is made yet more apparent, by the Inſinuation inſerted in this Article, as if the true Prophet never had any outward Symptoms attending him, ſuch as the Devil did imitate or ape, in his Heathen Prieſts, Poets or Prophets, and *Energumens*: For we have, as above, *Part* i. *Chap.* 6. abundantly evinced from the ſacred Text, and from many Commentators thereon, that as to the outward Signs of Prophecy, there was ſome Likeneſs, or Parallel, in the Operations of the good and the evil Spirit, inſpiring and actuating. This alſo is confirmed in the Second Part, by Mr. *Dodwell's* Obſervation, that when the Spirit fell upon the primitive Chriſtians, there was *ſome viſible Tokens* of it, which they called *the Manifeſtation of the Spirit*; which Tokens were ſuch, that the very Heathens knew on the Sight thereof, and did acknowledge, that ſuch Perſons were Prophets; which they could not have done, but from ſome Likeneſs to what they had been uſed to, in their own Prieſts, Poets, or *Energumens*. This therefore that is here noted upon this Article, being clear Matter of Fact, *Irenæus* may juſtly be thought to have reſpect to the Condemners of *Montanus*, who advanced ſuch Principles as theſe, when he ſays, at this very Juncture, there were ſome Men who endeavour'd to drive the Grace of Prophecy out of the Church.

Dr. *Hicks*, the Hiſtorian of *Montaniſm* ſays, "When "*Montanus* began, it was the Time of the Spirit, and there "was Liberty of Propheſying, or ſpeaking under Inſpira-

"tion,

" tion, which was allowed to as many, as were *Spiritual*, " by the *Greek*, *Pneumatical* (or *Energumenical*) that is, thoſe " that were thought to have receiv'd the Spirit, by certain " viſible Manifeſtations thereof; as it evidently appears, " from the moſt ancient Monuments that we have, and " particularly from the Epiſtles of St. *Paul*: For Example, " in *Rom.* viii. 26. where the Spirit or Inſpir'd Perſon is " ſaid, to make Interceſſions for us, with *Groanings, or ra-* " *ther Sighings*, (ſhort Breathings, στεναγμοις,) *unutterable*; " which Sighings were the Effect of thoſe Supernatural " Enthuſiaſms. But there were many Spirits in thoſe ear- " ly Days who had the cunning to transform themſelves ſo " into the Spirit of Chriſt, as it was impoſſible for any " without an extraordinary Aſſiſtance, and but by the mi- " raculous Power conveyed alſo for that Trial, to diſcover " them. Now the Prophets under Conſideration, appear'd " to be actuated or moved by a Spirit good or evil, and it " was a long Time doubted which: But their Agitations " were ſuppoſed to be involuntary, and they were af- " fected with Groanings, or Sighings, heaving of the " Breaſt, as even ready to burſt, the Effect of ſupernatural " Enthuſiaſms. The Clergy were much divided in their " Sentiments, even in *Aſia*, for a good while, and they " met ſeveral Times, to try that Spirit that moved them, " and ſpake thro' them, and agreed to proceed in the Tri- " al, according to the Standard of the undoubtedly true " Prophets. Upon the whole, becauſe ſome Perſons did " advance ſuch a Paradox, that the true ancient Prophets " were agitated under Inſpiration, even as theſe *Pretenders* " were; the Catholicks adjudged that Opinion, to be con- " trary to the *known and univerſal Tradition*, among both " the ancient *Jews* and Chriſtians, and therefore condemn'd " the *Montaniſts*, on this very Account."

Upon this Repreſentation and Explanation of the Article aboveſaid, the Churches of *Aſia*, *Africa* and *Europe*, may well be ſuppoſed to anſwer the *Apollinarian*, to this Effect; You have excommunicated *Montanus* and others, upon an outward Circumſtance of the Spirit actuating them; *Firſt*, then, we find that ye do adhere to the Definition of *Miltiades*, that a true Prophet never ſpoke in a Trance; and truly, unleſs ye can give us a Standard by which we are to judge of Prophets, better than that of the Scripture, we do reſolve not to put out our Eyes: But if we are allowed to uſe them, we are ſure, the Old and New Teſtament do both affirm to us, Trances upon their Prophets; either

then we muſt renounce thoſe Prophets, and by Conſequence the Authority of Scripture it ſelf, or we muſt ſay, that becauſe ye are ſetting up your ſelves in the Church, as the ſole Guide of our Faith, we renounce you. In like manner, we know not, wherefore ye pretend any Trial of Spirits to be requiſite at all, if ye lay it down for a Rule, that an Enthuſiaſm, or Agency of a Spirit, appearing by bodily viſible Effects, is concluſively evil. Would ye leave the Matter ſolely upon inviſible Operations? Then ſhew us the Reaſons, why ye have allow'd that the *Montaniſts* are acted by any Spirit at all. If then, there muſt be firſt, certain viſible Manifeſtations of a Spirit upon a Man, above his own, before he is to be accounted properly a Prophet, either true or falſe, as ye your ſelves grant. Why have ye not aſſigned, what thoſe Manifeſtations muſt be, other than ſuch as appear on his Body, the proper Seat or Veſſel of a natural, and ſupernatural Spirit's Agency? But ye do indeed own theſe Things to have been on the Prophets of the New Teſtament, as well as on the *Montaniſts*, and therefore from your own Words are ye now condemn'd. We obſerve, that ye have left out of your Article, any Mention of the Old Teſtament Prophets; but we ſuppoſe, the Reaſon of it was, that ye have found out ſome Tradition, by which ye pretend to make the Scriptures of it void, in reſpect to the Subject of Prophecy. We know not why ye ſhould travel ſo far, as to ſearch for a Tradition among the antient *Jews*, unleſs it were that ye are conſcious and ſelf-convinced, that their Scriptures ſtill remaining, are clearly againſt you, But now, ye have, it ſeems, found it, is it equitable (do ye think) in reſpect thereto, to renounce the Text it ſelf? Do as ye pleaſe, we cannot. But above all, why do ye tell us, of an *univerſal Tradition among the antient Chriſtians*, that the true Prophet was not agitated under Inſpiration? Do ye aſſume as well the Authority of palming upon us an univerſal Tradition, as ye do moſt unjuſtly appropriate to your ſelves, the Stile of the Catholick Church, when ye are but a Part of it? This Arrogance is unſufferable, unleſs ye have ſome new Charter, and Plenitude of Power yet undiſcover'd, to unchurch arbitrarily whomſoever ye pleaſe. But indeed, Tradition, antienter than our ſelves, among the Chriſtian Fathers, is expreſly in this Matter againſt you; for we can reckon up eaſily Numbers of them, who held the very Inſpiration of the Sybils to be Divine, notwithſtanding that it is notoriouſly known, that they were agitated under it. In Fine, we have read

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the full Caſe of your Prophet's Extacies, in the Books of *Tertullian*, which ye are not able to anſwer; and we have Prophets alſo among our ſelves, that ſet before our Eyes daily Patterns of the like. And upon all theſe Accounts, we muſt of Neceſſity reject this Article, of your condemning *Montanus*, and the reſt.

ARTICE XII.

It could not be *a true Divine Spirit, which bereft the poſſeſſed with it, of the Uſe of thoſe Faculties, which are God's Gift to us; nor a Spirit of holy Underſtanding, which by ſtripping them of all Underſtanding, turned them for the Time, into Brutes and Stocks.*

Anſwer. We are not (ſay the Churches which diſallowed the Condemnation of *Montanus*) to meaſure the deep Things of God, by our own Buſhel; the Standard is, by your own Confeſſion, the Teſtimony preceding of Prophets undoubtedly true; the Queſtion to be determined by that, is, whether a Prophet, upon the Superincidence of the Divine Spirit, may not for the Time, have the Exerciſe of his natural Faculties more or leſs ſuppreſſed? Or in other Words, whether the uninterrupted Uſe of the human Underſtanding, be abſolutely neceſſary to the Act of Divine Revelation or Inſpiration, to the Perſon? Ye have herein, on your Part, by a ſtrange Sort of aſſumed Prerogative, determined poſitively, under the Article foregoing, that no Prophet ever ſpoke in a Trance, tho' the Scripture affirms, a great Number that did ſo. Now we would fain know, what is meant by the Word *Extacy*, or Trance, if it be not a ſuppreſſing the Uſe, more or leſs of the natural Faculties, for the Time. We are not accuſtomed to the Turn which herein you give it, of changing Men into Brutes, and Stocks; for we ſuppoſe, that a ſuppreſſing the Exerciſe of the natural Faculties in Sleep, does not turn us into Brutes and Stocks. But if the Repoſe of ordinary Sleep, is no Shame or Reproach upon the human Nature, neither likewiſe do we think, that the deep Sleep or Trance, that fell upon *Adam* in the State of perfect Innocence, was ſo. Now the Text ſays, *the Lord God cauſed that deep Sleep*, or Trance, *to fall upon Adam*; but ye ſay, *it could not be* the Divine Spirit that cauſed it. And indeed, your new Philoſophy has ſo much uſurped upon the Authority of Scripture, that by your Syſtem herein laid down, *it could not be* the Divine Spirit that ſpake in Dreams, to *Daniel*, *Jacob*,

Jeremiah, *Solomon*, or to the *Joſephs* in the New and Old Teſtament. Moreover, as ye muſt, by the Rule above preſcribed, reject the Dreams, we are jealous of you, leſt ye go over to the *Epicurean* and prophane Scoffer, upon the Head of Viſions alſo. For the Apoſtle *John*, *Rev.* i. 17. *fell down as dead*, and we ſuppoſe, that no Man can be more bereaved of his natural Faculties, than one dead; and therefore by your Syſtem, *it could not be* the Divine Spirit, that did it unto *John*. St. *Paul* tells us, 2 *Cor.* xii. 3, 4. he did not know, whether he was in the Body, or out of the Body; and this he repeats twice, as if he foreſaw by the Spirit of Prophecy, your preſent Infidelity touching the Ways of that Spirit. For if he knew not ſo much, as whether he were dead or alive, he muſt be bereaved of all Underſtanding natural, and therefore according to you, *it could not be* the Divine Spirit that gave the Viſion. We could recite to ye, the like Things of *Daniel* and *Ezekiel*; but if Philoſophy in your Heads, has taken up the Place, that the ſacred Scripture ſhould have there, ye will doubtleſs reject them all. To be plain with ye, Brethren, if ye ſay in your Hearts, with reſpect to the Spirit of Prophecy, *We will not have this Man to reign over us*, we are but labouring to make a Blackamore white, for it ſignifies nothing to tell you of the former Prophets, who are angry with the preſent only, as if ye are agreed with the Proverb, that *a dead Dog don't bite*. Did we think ſo hardly of you, that ye voluntarily chooſe to be blind, we would not blear your Eyes with Scripture Proofs; but as we hope better Things of you, we muſt go on to plead, That we know not what is meant by St. *John's being in the Spirit*, unleſs it ſtands in a Diſtinction from, and Oppoſition to the perceiving of Things by the natural Faculties of his Mind and Senſes. But as ye ſay, this *could not be* from a Divine Spirit, we fear ye may at length charge it upon the Devil, as your Friend *Praxeas* has done. In like Manner, when *Ezekiel* and St. *Paul* tells us of their being rapt or caught up, the very Word *Rapture* implies, Man is out of, and beſides himſelf, and then by your Divinity, he muſt be poſſeſſed by the Devil. God forbid, Brethren, that ye ſhould blaſpheme againſt the Holy Ghoſt! But be that as it will, we cannot concur, for it is not for us to preſcribe Laws to Him: We have the Liberty only, of keeping to the Rule of Faith, or not, upon the Foot He has laid it down to us. We have read the Six Books of *Tertullian*, wherein the Extacies of the Prophets among you, are largely inſiſted on

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and defended; and we do not find, that ye are able, by Force of Argument, to disprove him. We would not trouble you with Opinions and Writings of our learned Men, but we hear a Doctor of your own, upon the Subject of the Gift of Languages, in the Apostolick Age, has publish'd thus; *Take Notice, that the Gift of strange Tongues, was usually accompanied with such strong Enthusiasms and Raptures, that the affected Person could not use his Understanding, so as to interpret and explain his Inspirations, in the Audience to which he spoke.* We cannot but agree with this Sentiment, because it is plain from 1 *Cor.* xiv. 13, 19. that those often who spoke strange Tongues in their Raptures, could not interpret them in their Native Speech; which shews, they had not the Understanding of them, and therefore are exhorted by the Apostle to supplicate from God, the Ability to give the Church the Interpretation: For the Gift of Interpretation was distinct from that of speaking a strange Tongue. And to conclude; upon the Grounds and Reasons above-cited, we cannot consent to extinguish Prophecy in the Church, on this Head; but are willing to give Liberty to the Spirit of Christ, to speak in his own Scriptural Ways. And therefore we exhort you to do the same, in *Montanus* and the rest.

ARTICLE XIII.

It could not be a true Spirit of Revelation from God, which utter'd any thing in his Name and Person, that proved to be false. Wherefore, the Spirit of Maximilla, *and every Spirit which acknowledged hers to be a true Spirit, could not be from God; since it was evidently made out, that certain Predictions of hers being decisive, were never verified; but on the contrary, were notoriously baffled by the Success.*

Answer. There is nothing more certain of these Matters, whereof we are treating, than that after the evident Failure of Prediction, among the *Montanists*, the Spirit of Prophecy in them, was, however by several of the most fam'd Churches in the World, acknowledg'd to be Divine. Wherefore, this Point was not in those Days held to be decisive, as in succeeding Ages even to this, the same is concluded to be. We shall then conceive, that the Churches which disallowed it to be decisive, might argue to the Effect following, with the *Apollinarians*,

We are very glad to find, that ye have inserted into this Article, that the subject Matter of it, was first *evidently made out*, before ye drew a Conclusion from it. It would

have doubtleſs been very honourable for ye, and much to the Peace of all the Churches, if the like Care on your Part had been uſed, in the other Points, imputed to the Prophets. But for the general Concluſion ye have drawn from the Fact, that is, that a Prediction *could not be* given out from God, which was not verified by the Event, it will admit of further Conſideration. We will therefore, impart to you our Thoughts on this Matter, as they are built upon the holy Teſtimonies of Prophecy in Scripture; for to them we appeal wholly, and will be concluded by them, as we all ought to be. In the firſt Place then, we learn from them, ſo manifold Inſtances of the Accompliſhment of Divine Prediction, that this Kind of Evidence alone, does ſuffice to demonſtrate, That the Spirit which dictated them, could be no other than that Being, whoſe Preſcience knows all Things at once, from the Beginning to the End, and was able uncontrollably, even from Men or Angels, to bring them to paſs. Particularly, this Preſcience and uncontrollable Power was glorioufly manifeſt, in all Things which concerned the Appearance of our Saviour on Earth. And in Sum, we deſire it may be heedfully obſerved, that the general Predictory Promiſes and Denunciations of God, and every Thing deliver'd by the Spirit of Prophecy, which is to be the Subject of a general Faith, and Hope in all Ages, among his peculiar Covenant People, are no ways ſubject to, or included in the Caſe, that ye have ſet before us.

Our incumbent Buſineſs is to enquire, whether every Prediction, which comes not within the Terms of that general Importance above deſcribed, but is of a very different Kind, and limited either to particular Perſons, or to ſome Time, Fact, and Circumſtance expreſſed, muſt be either verified by the Event, or elſe concluded not to have been given out from God. Ye have declared touching every Prediction abſolutely, even as well one that comes under the latter Denomination, as the former, that unleſs it be verified by the Event, *it could not* be from God. In this therefore, we do diſſent from you, touching a Promiſe or Threatning foretold, of the latter Kind, upon ſeveral Accounts. *Firſt*, becauſe, tho' we have no reaſon to doubt, but there are full and clear Directions in the Word, for that Acknowledgment of the Spirit of Prophecy, which is abſolutely required, under the Pain of the moſt diſmal Diſpleaſure of Heaven, if we are wanting therein. And notwithſtanding that the fixing of this Point, is of the great-

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eſt Conſequence poſſible, for the true Diſcernment of it; yet we cannot find upon Search, that there is any poſitive Signification in Scripture of the Sovereign Will, that we ſhould reject a Prophet, meerly upon this Head, that a Prediction utter'd by him, fails of Accompliſhment. What carries moſt Appearance of ſuch a Rule to judge of Prophecy by, is in *Deut.* xviii. 22. which according to the *Hebrew*, runs thus, *When a Prophet ſpeaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the* WORD [Haddabar] *ſhall not be, nor come, that is the Word the Lord hath not ſpoken, the Prophet hath ſpoken it preſumptuouſly.* Now in thoſe numerous Texts, where it is ſaid, that *the Word* [Haddabar,] *of the Lord came to* A, B, C. it cannot poſſibly ſignify, as we conceive, that a certain Thing that had been predicted, was accompliſhed, but that the Power Divine commiſſionating, or the Eſſential Word manifeſting himſelf, *came* to *A, B, C.* This Senſe of *Haddabar*, [the Word,] is clear alſo in *Jer.* v. 13. *the Word is not in them*, being but a Definition of the Prophet's Heavenly Call. Thus again, *Hoſ.* i. 2. *the Beginning of the Word of the Lord, in Hoſea*; and ſo *Jer.* xxvii. 18. *If they be Prophets, and if the Word of the Lord be in (on* or *with) them.* From which Texts and others, it is plain, that [*Haddabar,*] the *Word* in *Deut.* xviii. 22. may as well be underſtood of the Power manifeſting a Prophet, as of any Subject of his Meſſage predicted; and we think it ought to be conſtrued there, in the former of theſe, rather than the latter Senſe, for theſe enſuing Reaſons.

Firſt, becauſe the purport of the Text is, to give a Preſcription to know, what was not the Word of the Lord, at the time the ſame was ſpoken; which appears by the Word rendred, *WHEN a Prophet ſpeaketh*, and by the Injunction annexed, *thou ſhalt not be afraid of him*; now to aſſign the Accompliſhment of a Prediction, for a Rule of Judging at the time when it is ſpoken, is altogether inconſiſtant. *Secondly*, there are ſeveral Inſtances in the Old Teſtament, of Prophets that brought a Meſſage from God commanding only, or comforting, and of oracular Directions upon a Queſtion, without any Prediction at all, and of conſequence this Rule could have no Place, to guide Men to know, whether it was the Word of the Lord or not: So under the New Teſtament, the Holy Ghoſt's Gift of Prophecy, is defined to us, to be for the Edification, Exhortation, and Comfort of the Church; all which might be and we have Reaſon to believe were, moſtly without any Prediction: But in all theſe Caſes, this Rule of

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the Text, *which is given as a general One, for all Prophets*, was insignificant. *Thirdly*, as Prediction ought in its own Nature, to be believ'd before fulfilling, otherwise the Declaration of it loses often its Intent and Use with Men; and by this Rule a Prophet might warrantably be rejected until the Accomplishment; and so the Messages of Reproof, Exhortation, Terror and Consolation, pertinent to the living Generation, would have been of no Use in *Malachi*, and some others, who gave out no Prediction, but what were undefined for Time, and of things to take place, after that Age, and some not till many Ages succeeding. Therefore we conclude upon all these Reasons, that (*Haddabar*) *the WORD*, means the Power commissionating, and that there the Text under Consideration, stands by the Context plainly opposed to the Prophets speaking, in his own Presumption or Pride; and thereby does hint or imply, some *visible supernatural Agency* ruling on him, which the prophetick Ages of the *Jews* were universally acquainted with; so that the Place imports a Negative, in Respect to a Prophet, that is, that without the Appearance of such supernatural Power, this Text does acquit Men from being afraid of, and allows them to have no regard to, a Prophet speaking in the Name of the Lord.

Wherefore, as above alledg'd, the first Reason, dear Brethren, why we cannot concur with you, to reject a Prophet merely, because a Prediction of his was not verified by the Event, is; because there is no positive Signification of the Sovereign Will of God, that we are to do so, and we have no Authority to make New Laws, for the Trial of Prophets: But as to what is undetermined by the Written Word, we therein depend upon the Testimony of the Spirit surviving among us, for our Direction in. Now as ye will not be concluded, by the prophetick Spirit in *Proculus*, and others witnessing among us, to the same Spirit of Christ in *Montanus* and others; so another Reason, why we cannot concur with ye, to condemn them on this Head is drawn also from the written Word. *Secondly*, then it is noted as a speciality in *Samuel*, that the Lord suffer'd none of his Words to fall to the Ground, but that all that he said came surely to pass, 1 *Sam.* iii. 19. ix. 6: For we do not remember that the like is affirm'd of any other Prophet. On the other side we do apprehend, it was confessedly sometimes if not often otherwise, since it is mention'd as a Proverb, *Ezek.* xii. 22. *the Days are prolonged, and every Vision faileth*; some Ground for which at least, seems plainly to be

be acknowledged, *v.* 25, 28. *I will ſpeak, and the Word that I ſhall ſpeak, ſhall be no more prolonged; for thus ſaith the Lord, there ſhall none of my Words be prolonged any more, but I will ſay the Word, and will perform it.* And the like alſo hereto, is as we conceive, confeſſed, *Num.* xiv. 30, 34. *Doubtleſs ye ſhall not come into the Land, wherein I ſwear to make you dwell, and ye ſhall know my Breach of Promiſe.* Thus alſo it occurs touching *Ely*, in 1 *Sam.* ii. 30. *Wherefore the Lord God of Iſrael ſaith, I ſaid indeed, that thy Houſe, and the Houſe of thy Father, ſhould walk before me for ever; but now, the Lord ſaith be it far from me.* After the ſame Manner, *Jeremiah* ſeems openly to complain, *Chap.* iv. 10. *Ah Lord God, ſurely thou haſt greatly deceiv'd this People and* Jeruſalem, *ſaying, ye ſhall have Peace; whereas the Sword reacheth unto the Soul.* And *Chap.* xv. 18. *why is my Pain perpetual, and my Wound incurable, wilt thou be altogether unto me as a Lyar, and as Waters that fail?* But as theſe Texts, written by the Spirit of Prophecy do in themſelvs expreſly and clearly acknowledge, a Failure ſometimes of Prediction and Promiſe, given out by the ſame Spirit; ſo by the Tenour of Scripture Authority in other Points valid upon Men, they amount to a Prohibition, not to make ſuch Failure deciſive againſt the ſame Spirit predicting as ye now do. *Thirdly*, as there is nothing of the foregoing Clauſe, but what was written aforetime, for our Learning, that we thro' a Patience of *the Scripture Teaching*, might have Hope, *Rom.* xv. 4. ſo we cannot conceive better why the Wiſdom of God, who is jealous of his Honour, and knows how to ſecure it, better than we, ſhould expreſly record ſome Failures of Prophetick Prediction; but that we are to learn thence, not concluſively to condemn the Spirit on that Account, as ye have done; for ye all know the celebrated Inſtance of *Jonah*, touching *Nineveh*, therefore we do but name it. Read alſo *Judges* x. 11, 13. *And the Lord ſaid unto the Children of Iſrael, ye have forſaken me, and ſerved other Gods, wherefore I will deliver you no more?* yet in the very next Chapter it appears, that *Jephtha* had a Commiſſion from God, to deliver them out of the Hands of the *Ammonites*. Thus was *David* tried, as appears, if ye read attentively the 89th *Pſalm*, from the 19th Verſe to the 45th. And thus God multiplied his Mercy to King *Hezekiah*, and granted him a Reſpit of many Years. We ſhall not enumerate more of theſe Inſtances, recorded for our Inſtruction, except that only of *Abraham*, whoſe Faith in God revealing, was accounted to him for Righteouſneſs, and who is therein propounded principally

cipally for the Pattern of ours. Read therefore, *Gen.* xiii. 14, 15, 17. where *the Lord ſaid unto Abraham, lift up now thine Eyes, and look from the Place where thou art, North, South, Eaſt and Weſt; for all the Land which thou ſeeſt, to thee will I give it; ariſe, walk thro' the Land, in the Length of it, and in the Breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee.* This is that great Father of the Faithful, of whom God Himſelf witneſſeth, *Chap.* xviii. 19. ſaying, *I know him,* that he will command his Children, and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the Way of the Lord, *that the Lord may bring upon Abraham, that which He hath ſpoken of him.* Notwithſtanding all which expreſly defined Promiſe and unparallel'd Atteſtation, that it would not fail, thro' the Demerit of the Perſon; yet behold, the Effect affirmed, *Acts* vii. 5. by the ſame Spirit of Prophecy, which ye own to be Divine, and the Standard for us to try by; where it is to be read, *God gave him none Inheritance in it, no not ſo much as to ſet his Foot on; yet He promiſed, that He would give it to him, for a Poſſeſſion.*

Having thus therefore, more largely debated, this Article whereon ye have condemn'd the *Montaniſts*, becauſe it ſeem'd to carry more Weight in it than the reſt; we leave the ſame to your mature Conſideration, Brethren, whether ye ought not to retract your Sentence, built upon it, and to ceaſe from your doing Deſpite, by ſo manifold Contrarieties, to the Spirit of God. As to our ſelves, ſeeing the Word of God doth not, in this Caſe, warrant us to concur with you, in the framing Laws and Impoſitions on our Heavenly Maſter, we dare not; on the contrary, ſeeing we have compared the Things of the Spirit now ſpoken, with the Spiritual Things written, that were given by Divine Inſpiration of Old; we do ſtill continue our Communion with the *Montaniſt* Churches, and do reject your Sentence upon them.

ARTICLE XIV.

The Authority of that Spirit could not be divine, which was for encouraging private Perſons to ſet up a new Order of Diſcipline, in the Church, how good and holy ſoever in it ſelf, and thereby, deſpiſing an Authority in the Rulers of it, which was certainly Divine.

Anſwer. Say the Churches of *Aſia*, *Africa* and *Europe* to the *Apollinarians*; Pray give us a clear Account of this Matter, which ye have ſet forth to be ſo horrid.

The *Apollinarians* reply, Ye know Brethren, that the Gift

Gift of Propheſying did abound in the Chriſtian Church at firſt, and that there was then Liberty univerſally of *Prophe-*
" *ſying*, as taken in the ſtricteſt Senſe of the Word; par-
" ticularly there was *Quadratus*, and one *Amia*, a Holy Wo-
" man of *Philadelphia*, and many other in our Parts, who
" likewiſe were endowed with the true Spirit of Prophe-
" cy, about the Year 150. However we can give ye lit-
" tle Account of theſe, but about the ſame Time or ſoon
" after, there was *Alcibiades*, *Theodotus* and *Montanus*, and
" which of theſe alſo was the firſt in Propheſying, we can-
" not tell; they were certainly in very great Numbers,
" that were led away by this Manner of Teaching, tho'
" ſome will have it, that thoſe who adhered to them, were
" but few in Compariſon of ſuch, who did not: How-
" ever that be, the Uſe of the Word *Catholick* was under
" Diſpute, and the Inſpir'd pretended to it, among whoſe
" Party, for certain, there were Perſons of unqueſtion'd
" Probity, Learning, Honour, Fortune, and even ſome in
" the higheſt Stations in the Church, who could hardly be
" ſuppoſed to have any ſelfiſh, or ill Deſign. We ſhall not
" trouble you more with theſe Generals, but come now to
" particularize touching *Montanus*, who appear'd diſtin-
" guiſhed in working Signs and Miracles. Concerning
" this Man, the *Annaliſt* ſuppoſes, he might at firſt act by
" the Operation of God, but whether it were ſo, or by
" that of the Devil transformed, it was in ſuch a Manner,
" that no body was able to diſcern, becauſe both his Life
" and Doctrine were holy and blameleſs. Even the Or-
" thodox and Catholicks were much divided in their Sen-
" timents, and when he came to be condemn'd, both Sides
" in the Diviſion, ſtill claimed the Stile of the Orthodox
" and Catholick Church.

" Thus it came to paſs, that in the Beginning there was
" no ſmall Diviſion among the Chriſtians of *Aſia*, upon the
" Head above-mention'd, tho' all Men concluded that there
" was ſome Spirit, good or evil, which managed this En-
" thuſiaſm. As to *Montanus*, he was originally one of the
" moſt *ſtrict Sect of the Apoſtolicals*; and as he had in all
" Things appear'd moſt zealous, for the Laws and Cuſtoms
" of the Church, ſo he continued a moſt diligent Obſer-
" ver of *all its Diſcipline*, therein ſtriving to excell every
" one beſides. Thoſe on his Side, did in all Things con-
" form themſelves to the Cuſtoms and Ordinances, that
" were deliver'd by the Apoſtles, and did approve them-
" ſelves unto all Men, ſtrict Obſervers of the Order and

" *Diſ-*

" *Diſcipline*, eſtabliſhed throughout the Churches, by even
" ſtriving to go herein beyond all the reſt. An extream
" Honourer was *Montanus*, of the Traditions of the Apo-
" ſtolical Elders, and a mighty Stickler, for reſtoring the
" decay'd Spirit and Life of Chriſtianity in others. We
" have nothing to ſay againſt his Life and Doctrine: Nor
" is it deny'd, as we know of, that he was Orthodox in the
" Notion of the Church, as a Chriſtian Fellowſhip right-
" ly formed, according to the Pattern deliver'd by Chriſt
" Himſelf and knit together by the Bond of his Spirit, un-
" der Paſtors and Officers, of ſeveral Orders, having a
" clear and certain Miſſion ſeverally from him.

All this is very well; ſay the Churches of *Aſia*, *Africa*, and *Europe*, to the *Apollinarians* and we adhere to it: But to come to the Article of this Indictment of *Montanus* and the reſt; wherein did he or they, ſet up *a New Order of Diſcipline*, and thereby deſpiſe an Authority certainly Divine? Pray, go on?

" As there were, ſay the *Apollinarians*, many Spirits in
" the early Days before us, that had the Cunning to tranſ-
" form themſelves, into the Spirit of Chriſt, ſo as it was
" impoſſible for any, without an extraordinary Aſſiſtance,
" to diſcover them; it was hereupon thought proper by
" the Divine Wiſdom, that Chriſt the Head of his Church,
" ſhould, by his own Spirit extraordinarily, aſſiſt his Bo-
" dy, in the Diſcovery of ſuch Counterfeits, *by the Gift of*
" *diſcerning Spirits*. Now *Montanus* did readily own all
" this, and was an extream Honourer of the apoſtolical El-
" ders, but he looked upon us their Succeſſors, as degene-
" ted, and inveſted only with an outward Character,
" without the Power which formerly uſed to attend it.
" Therefore, he conſider'd us as incompetent Judges in his
" Caſe, thro' the Want on our Part, of the extraordinary
" Gifts of Prophecy, and in particular that of diſcerning
" Spirits; and moreover, he inſiſted, that the Character of
" a *Prophet*, was independent on the other Officers of the
" Church, in like Manner as the antient Prophets, under
" the *Moſaick* Diſpenſation were; that is, he pretended,
" that the Prophet was an Order diſtinct, eſtabliſhed in
" the Chriſtian Church; and ſo far as the Prophets were
" under the Operation of a ſupernatural and Divine A-
" gent, ſo far they were exempted from the Judgment of
" thoſe, who had not the Prophetick Gift of Diſcern-
" ment.

Very well, ſay the Churches of *Aſia*, *Africa* and *Europe*, we

we do not perceive thus far, but that we and ye are agreed, that *Montanus* is Orthodox and Catholick, in his Notion of the Church; seeing ye own, or at least do not deny, that the Prophet was a distinct Order in it, whether he were a Bishop or not; and if it were impossible sometimes (as ye say) without an extraordinary Assistance, to distinguish between Spirits, Christ our Head was appointed by Divine Wisdom, to assist his Body, by *the Gift of Discerning*, and his Spirit, discovering the Counterfeits. But pray Brethren, go on to the Article of Indictment.

"'Tis true, say the *Apollinarians*, but the Mistake of "*Montanus*, lay in the Application of his Notion of the "Church. For he (even he himself) under the Chara-"cter of a Prophet, proved a mighty Stickler, for restor-"ing the decayed Spirit and Life of Christianity, and set "up for reviving what was decay'd, and for reforming "what (we confess) might be amiss, not that he, or they "pretended to unchurch others; but all this he did, with-"out having been first approved of, by the Church, as if "he were exempt from the Authority of his rightful Su-"periors, sitting *in the Chairs of the Apostles*. For he pre-"tended an immediate Delegation of Authority from God, "for restoring what was decayed, and reforming what "was amiss, and said that herein, he was not subject to "any Appeal to Persons uninspir'd; and this is what we "deny.

But say the Churches of *Asia*, *Africa*, and *Europe*, If we apprehend the thing rightly, ye *Apollinarian* Bishops, do not pretend any Apostolical or Prophetical Gifts, that is, any of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit. We do not therefore understand, how ye come to be seated in the *Chairs of the Apostles* (the very patriarchal Prophets of the Church) in this Case of arbitrary Judging and Condemning the Spirit of Christ on *Montanus*. For ye have granted, that the Discerning of Spirits was not possible, in such Cases as that of *Montanus* blameless in Life and Doctrine, without the extraordinary Gift of the Holy Ghost. If ye claim to have the Spirit or Gift of Prophecy, speak it out, otherwise we conclude ye do not. The Subject ye charge him and others upon now, is, *the setting up a New Order of Discipline*; we hope that whilst ye are proving the Fact upon him, ye will not instead thereof, make your selves the Criminals. For the *Jews* never did insist, that a Prophet must first be approved by the Church, before he utter'd the Word of the Lord, as ye now do; nor

do

do we know, that ever the Apoſtles empower'd any, arbitrarily to judge the Spirit, without the Spirit extraordinary. Prove therefore your own Commiſſion: For if *your Authority* in this Point be not *certainly Divine*, ye cannot juſtly lay the Indictment as ye have in this Article, that the Spirit deſpiſed *ſuch an One*.

" Under theſe Inſpirations, ſay the *Apollinarians*, they " gave forth a great Number of good Moralities, and " Exhortations to Holineſs and Strictneſs of Life: But " whilſt in a moſt rigorous Manner, they preſſed a Refor- " mation, both of Church Diſcipline and Manners, they " reflected upon the *Catholicks* as too looſe in both; teaching " Men, that unleſs their Righteouſneſs did exceed that of " *theſe*, they could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven " Their Propheſyings had an Appearance of agreeing in " all Things, with thoſe in Holy Writ, but calculated for " the preſent Time and State, in which they lived. They " derogated not at all from the Honour of the Prieſthood, " but only ſeem'd to lament, that the Apoſtolical Spirit, " which had been firſt communicated by the Impoſition of " Hands, was then in a great meaſure departed from the " Biſhops and Clergy; ſo that they were become Stran- " gers to the very Spirit that was in Chriſt and his Apo- " ſtles, and which ought to be the Seal of their Miſſion. " And hence by degrees, they proceeded to leſſen the " Eſteem which was due to thoſe that ſit in *the Chair of* " *Chriſt*, and his Apoſtles."

Beloved Brethren, ſay the other Churches; under the foregoing Paragraph, we beg'd of you, to clear your own Commiſſion, of ſitting in the *Chairs of the Apoſtles* in Judgment upon a Prophet; but inſtead of clearing your Authority therein, to be certainly Divine, ye have not offer'd in the leaſt, or ſaid one Word to prove it ſo; nevertheleſs, ye have in the laſt Clauſe advanced yourſelves ſtill higher, and now ye are ſeated, by yourſelves, in *the very Chair of Chriſt*. If ye will thus go on, and give us no Account how ye came by this Authority, we muſt openly proteſt againſt ſuch an unheard of Uſurpation, that would even become the black Character of *the Man of Sin*, For ye muſt neceſſarily prove, that ye do ſit *in the Chair of Chriſt*, in the Point before us, or we can never in reſpect to the Honour of our Divine Saviour, find it, that the Spirit in *Montanus* and others, in refuſing to b e Silenced by you, did deſpiſe *an Authority certainly Divine*; as ye have now explained the ſame.

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The *Apollinarian* Churches add, " The Seat of this great " Evil being in *Phrygia*, and Parts adjacent, we acquaint " you, Brethren, that the Clergy of that Country, did " contend for the Right of Chriſtian Biſhops, as the ordi- " nary Judges, in the Caſe of Prophecy, ſince the Death of " the Apoſtles; they aſſembled ſeveral Times, and in di- " vers Places, in order to conſider of the proper Methods, " that were likely to ſtem this Tide, which threatned to " overflow them, and to bear down the antient Banks. " They watched in earneſt, againſt the Incurſion of evil " Spirits, and Wolves in the Sheep's Cloathing of fancied " Revelation, and againſt that Incurſion in particular, which " was *called the Phrygian Hereſy*, whilſt as yet it was in its " Embrio only. They rejected, in a Word, the whole " Scheme of *Montanus*, both as to its new Diſcipline and " new Inſpiration, as having no ſufficient Credentials. And " they judged it, not compatible with the Charter of the " Catholick Church, which had receiv'd the Right of Ju- " dicature over Spirits, and to which all the Promiſes do " righfully belong."

Ye having thus finiſhed your Account of this Article (ſay the Churches of of *Aſia*, *Africa* and *Europe* to the *Apollinarians*) what we particularly remind you of is, *Firſt*, That in one and the ſame Breath, ye both accuſe and acquit *Montanus* of being an Heretick; for in the Beginning ye affirmed, that his Life and Doctrine were holy and blameleſs; and now in the Cloſe ye ſay, that his Inſpiration was called *the Phrygian Hereſy*, whilſt as yet it was in its Embrio only. With like Coherence, ye ſay *Secondly*, that he and his Adherents were of the Sect of the Apoſtolicals, and the moſt ſtrict Obſervers of the Cuſtoms and Ordinances deliver'd by the Apoſtles, and did approve themſelves unto all Men, conformable to the Order and Diſcipline, eſtabliſhed throughout the Churches; and ſtill concerning the ſame Time, even before your Sentence, ye tell us, that the Tide threatned to bear down the ancient Banks. After the ſame Manner, of an unintelligible Inconſiſtency, ye at once aſſert *Thirdly*, That he was Orthodox indiſputably, in his Notion of the Church, according to the Pattern deliver'd by Chriſt, and yet ye reject the whole Scheme of *Montanus*, in his Diſcipline touching it, as new and unheard of before. *Furthly*, Ye own the Clergy even in *Aſia* it ſelf, were much divided in their Sentiments, to the very Time of the Sentence paſſed upon him; and that they contended among themſelves, about

the uninſpir'd Biſhops Right of Judicature, over the Prophet: And now ye ſtamp your ſelves alone with the Name of Catholick, excluding our Churches alſo, as well as theirs from having any thing to do with that Denomination. *Fifthly*, Ye acknowledge, that Chriſt the Head of his Church, ſhould by his own Spirit extraordinarily, and by the Gift of diſcerning Spirits, determine ſummarily touching a Prophet. But at the ſame Time, that He is preſent with us, by that Prophetical Gift, acquitting and juſtifying *Montanus*, ye do concluſively condemn him, without any like Claim on your Part, and even while ye confeſs, it was not poſſible otherwiſe to diſtinguiſh in ſome Caſes, the Evil from the Good Spirit. *Laſtly*, Inſtead of giving us an Account how ye came to place your ſelves, in the Chair of Chriſt; ye only ſay, that the *Phrygian* Biſhops judged the exiſting Inſpiration, incompatible with the Charter of the Catholick Church. Unto which we anſwer, Be the Guilt upon their Heads, who reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt, by ſlandering Him for a Devil, as in *Mark* iii. 28--30. We on our Part, who are Biſhops as much as ye, do not think, that the Subſiſtence of Prophecy, is incompatible with the Charter of the Chriſtian Church, but contrariwiſe, it is the greateſt Priviledge contained in it. But as the Spirit in *Montanus* has no ways ſet up a new Order of Diſcipline in the Church, nor *deſpiſed any Authority thereof certainly Divine*, we do acquit him and all Adherents to Prophecy, from the Allegations of this Article, ſince ye have not proved one Tittle of them. On the other ſide we exhort you, to take heed what ye do, in taking upon ye to ſit in the Chair of Chriſt, whilſt ye ſeem even to reject Him, in rejecting thoſe whom He ſends, and quite to have forgot the Commandment Apoſtolical, not to quench the Spirit, nor deſpiſe, Prophecy, which is an Authority, (above all others) in the Church *certainly Divine*.

CHAP. III.

Of Controverted PROPHECY, *in the* Second *and* Third Century.

§1. IN the preceding Chapter, it has fully appear'd, that the Excommunication and Sentence paſſed againſt *Montanus*, for being acted by a Diabolical Spirit, was far from

from being confirmed by, and ſo made the Act of the univerſal Church, in the Age, wherein the ſame was capable of being better underſtood, and more impartially debated, *viz.* for Thirty or Forty Years after the Debate about it aroſe. What ſucceeding Ages, further removed from the Scene of Facts, and more vitiated in their Principles than this early one was, did judge thereof, we ſhall ſee by-and-by. In the mean Time, we thought it highly importing the Honour of the Chriſtian Church in general, and needful to the better Diſcovery of Truth, to inſiſt more largely therein than uſual, in this compendious Treatiſe, that neither the Excommunication it ſelf, nor the ſeveral Grounds and Reaſons, whereon the Spirit was adjudged Diabolical, were allowed to be valid, by the Concurrence of the Churches or Congregations compoſing the Catholick Church: For which Cauſe, we thought it but equitable to repreſent the Churches oppoſing, in alledging their Reaſons, and interpoſing their Authority, upon many of the Articles there charged; becauſe it ſufficiently appears, that the *Montaniſts* condemn'd, did appeal from the Sentence, unto all the Churches of *Chriſtendom*, and did inſiſt to juſtify themſelves by the general Uſages, and all foregoing Preſcription in the Church, as well as by Scripture it ſelf; and their chief Writers, *Themiſon*, *Proculus* and *Tertullian*, did in their Defence and Apology, argue upon Principles, maintainable by Holy Writ, and juſtifiable by the Practice of the two Generations or Ages, that had intervened between that of the Apoſtles and them.

§ 2. Upon the Proofs that have been there produced, taking it then for granted, that the Sentence paſſed upon the Spirit for Diabolical, was not the Act of the Church univerſal, but that of a Part of it only, and probably but a ſmall Part alſo, we now proceed to examine, whether this Part of the Church, *viz.* the Biſhops and Communions or Churches which condemn'd *Montanus*, did not in the Tenour of their Proceedings (recited in the two former Chapters diſcover plainly upon that Occaſion, a Diſpoſition to reject, deſpiſe and render contemptible the Spirit of Prophecy it ſelf. *Firſt* then, it appears by their own Confeſſion, that tho' the extraordinary Graces of the Spirit, were at that Time plentiouſly conſpicuous in all the Churches known to *Irenæus* in the *Weſt*, the *Apollinarians* almoſt in the furtheſt *Eaſt* had loſt them. And as they are charged to have fallen from their firſt Love, they do not go about to diſprove it, by lamenting the Loſs of the Preſence of Chriſt prophetically;

cally; and this seems to argue the little Esteem they had of the Thing, which makes up the Propriety of *despising Prophecyings* 1 *Thes.* v. 20. for ἐξουθενειτε in that Text, does properly signify, to esteem a thing, little or *nothing worth.*

§ 3. They having lost the Spirit extraordinarily, which in its Gifts, was the usual Distinction of Preheminence, and presiding in the Church of those Ages, as appears in the Second Part of this Treatise; they *Secondly*, proceeded to esteem it a Grievance, as the *Jews* usually represented the Message of God to them, *the Burden of the Lord.* For thus much is intimated to us, by the modern Historians in the First Chapter, who tell us that the Reproofs of the Spirit in *Montanus* were highly resented; because tho' there was something of Moral Looseness, connived at, or indulged in those Churches, the Bishops could not allow to the Spirit a Liberty of such Reproof, or the Authority of requiring a Reformation thereof. Now as this Indignation arose, before the Sentence passed upon the Spirit for a Diabolical one, it is evident thence, that there was in the Judges of him, a Disposition to turn their Backs, and do Despite to the true Testimony of Jesus, and therein of his Authority.

§ 4. This withdrawing of Allegiance, and the Tendency to a Revolt in the Churches of *Asia*, from the Spirit of Christ present among them, appears further *Thirdly*, by the uninspir'd Bishop's Claim of judging the Things of the Spirit, by his own meer Authority. For, if the Sentence against *Montanus* had been founded upon evident Testimonies of Scripture, the Judgment doubtless had been of Divine Authority, and not ascribable to the Bishops of *Asia*: But herein *Montanus* was justify'd, in not submitting to their Judicature, because the Spirit of Prophecy being then luminously existing in the Church, it was in those Ages an universally receiv'd Rule, That the Trial of Spirits was not to be performed by those who were destitute of the extraordinary Gifts; but the Judgment in such case was left to be decided by the Spirit in others, as might be made appear also, from the New Testament Canons. And that the true State of Fact, in relation to the judging of Prophecy, was such precedently to them, the *Apollinarians* themselves did not deny; but they pleaded to have that acknowledg'd Custom of the Churches, to be reversed and alter'd, in Favour of the Pastors uninspir'd.

§ 5. By the last Paragraph, the excommunicating, whilst they own'd Prophecy might be existing in other Churches, and also that without the extraordinary Gift of Discernment,

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it was not possible to determine touching Spiritual Appearances, in some Cases; they are self-condemn'd in doing so, when they might have submitted the Matter to the Spirit existing, unless their Sentence be maintainable from the Scripture Text. But instead of such an Appeal to the Spirit, they shewed a yet greater Opposition to him. *Fourthly*, By taxing the Inspir'd, with setting up a new Order of Ministers, and a new Discipline of Government, in the Church; as if the Bishops that immediately succeeded the Apostles, had presided over the Flock, without being constituted Overseers of it, by the Spirit extraordinarily upon, or attesting to them. And under this Insinuation, tho' the same in our Second Part be evidenced apparently false, and that the Ordination of Ministers themselves, by the joint suffrage of the People, included the prophetical Voice, to approve it, yet they went on to magnify themselves, however uninspir'd, as if sitting in the Thrones of the Apostles (as they term it) and even in the Chair, or Judgment-Seat of Christ. All which is the Drift and Purport of the Fourteenth Article, and is virtually contained in the Prerogative claimed by them under the first Article, wherein to support it, and colour their Claim they wrongfully assumed the Style of the Church Catholick.

§ 6. The Insurrection or Sedition (as *Clement* calls it) of these Opposers of the Spirit, in the Time and upon Occasion of *Montanus*, is evinced *Fifthly*, From the confessed Writings of *Miltiades*, (one of the first, if not the very first Writer in this Cause) against all new Pretences undistinguishably of that kind; and which is confirmed by their Appeal in Article XI. to former deceased Prophets, as if there was none then living, and acknowledg'd in the Church of Christ. The contrary whereto, the whole Christian World were Witnesses of, as appears in the Historical Account thereof, in our Second Part; nay, upon the first appearing of *Montanus*, they themselves owned, that it was the Time of the Spirit, and that there was Liberty publickly of Prophesying every where in the Church. So that, if we may build upon their own Word, the Ministration of these very inspir'd Persons, while the Matter was yet in Embrio, and before any Pretence of Ecclesiastical Decision on it, was called *the Phrygian Heresy*: Which clearly intimates a Condemnation (in their Sense of the Word *Heresy*) of the Spirit before Trial, and does shew, that there was in that Country, a Sort of Men in being, who impiously withstood Inspiration at a venture, without Fear of

offending, by a raſh Cenſure, and *evil ſpeaking* of the Holy Ghoſt. For as to the true Definition of Blaſphemy, the Derivation of the *Greek* Word plainly limits it to an evil and wrongful ſpeaking of Him. And beſides *Miltiades* aſſerted, *That all new Revelation tendeth to break the Unity of the Church*, which affixes an Evil neceſſarily, upon the Spirit of Prophecy it ſelf.

§ 7. The wilful Contempt of the Spirit of Prophecy, the Teſtimony of Jeſus, by the Biſhops of *Aſia*, is apparent *Sixthly*, from their aſſerting, that the true Prophet had nether Extacy or Agitations, that is, neither a Suppreſſion of the Senſes total or in Part, during the Divine Manifeſtations. Now, becauſe the Scripture throughout is ſo full in aſſerting theſe Attendances of Prophecy, and that they themſelves owned it in ſome Meaſure, it could be no other than ſome Averſion to Truth, and an Indiſpoſition to the Love of it, that prompted them to look out for ſome Aid from Philoſophy, as a Releif againſt *the Burden of the Lord*, which they earneſtly deſired to ſhake off. And thus when by the Fourth Article, they inſiſted that the Spirit in *Montanus* wanted Evidence, without being able to ſpecify what kind of Evidence it was which he wanted, and they were in Right to require; it is imply'd, that any other One, Two or Three Biſhops or Pariſh Prieſts, as well as *Apollinaris*, *Julian* and *Zoticus*, if they were not themſelves convinc'd of the Commiſſion of a Prophet, might arbitrarily ſentence him for an infernal One, and ſo by Excommunication cut him off from the Society and Communion of Chriſtians; for by the Multitudes on the ſpot adhering to *Montanus*, the People appear not to have concurr'd. Which Sort of Proceeding tended evidently to lodge in the Hands of the Clergy, either one or more, a Power to excommunicate whom they pleas'd, without the Suffrage of the Church or Concurrence of the Community, as the Practice of theſe Ages was to have; and in that Caſe a blind Obedience is requir'd to Man, even touching the moſt ſacred and deep Things of God, upon ſlight Evidence among Chriſtians; whereas *H. Ainſworth* on the *Penteteuch* tells us, from the *Jewiſh* Rabbins, that a Prophet could not be legally try'd among the *Jews*, but by the great Council of the Nation, as our Lord ſaid, that *a Prophet could not periſh out of Jeruſalem*.

§ 8. The Oppoſition of theſe Biſhops of *Aſia*, to the Spirit of Chriſt, does manifeſt it ſelf *Seventhly*, From the Poſition which is implyed in the firſt Article, that the Non-

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Acknowledgment of a Prophet by the Church, is Proof that he was not of God. Which Position is not only contrary to the Tenour of Scripture-Rule, in that Case, but tended to establish the Opinion of Infallibility in the Church, in whatsoever she concludes at any Time. The like Opposition to the Spirit it self, without any necessary Limitation to *Montanus*, does in the Bishops of *Asia* demonstrate the same again, by the Conclusion expressed in the Second Article, *viz.* that Prophecy not communicated to a Man by a Succession from the Apostles, cannot be from the Spirit of Christ, and therefore ought to be rejected; which Maxim is proved to be anti-scriptural. But what can we infer, from so many clear and plain Contraventions to the Authority of the sacred Text, less than that the Pursuers of such Measures did resolve at any Rate, to drive the Grace of Prophecy, or the Presence of Christ extraordinary, out of the Church of Christ?

§ 9. Had therefore the Bishops of *Asia*, acted in this Matter without any Malevolence to Prophecy it self, and been only moved therein by a Concern for the Honour of Christ, and the Welfare of his Church, they would never have sentenced the Spirit to have been a Devil, because he wrought upon his Followers to be holy, according to the severest Precepts of the Gospel, as in the Sixth Article. Had they acted with Sobriety of Judgment, and a sufficient Demonstration of Truth on their Side, they could never have fallen into Measures so purely Satanical, as the following Articles do exhibit us. For in charging the *Montanists* by Article III. that they assumed greater Prerogatives than the Apostles, they do not offer one Word of Proof, any more than they do, in respect to the Accusation of the Fifth Article, that the *Montanists* made the Burden of Legal Observances in the Church heavier. These therefore, are to be look'd upon, as no other than the sharp Arrows of the grand Accuser of the Brethren, which are shot forth again in the Seventh Article, wherein the *Montanists* are charged most unjustly with Gluttony, Riot and Lewdness. The like Temper of Calumny vents its Poison again, in the Eighth Article, where the Inspir'd are loaded with the Imputation of taking Bribes, and so far the Fury prevailed on that Head, that they affix to it a General Falsity, *viz.* That it is inconsistent with one Prophesying by the Spirit of God, to accept of Presents.

§ 10. This Denomination of false Accusers, so inconsistent with Gospel-Ministers, lies very hard upon the Bishops

of *Aſia*, by their own Confeſſion on Article IX. where *Maximilla* and the reſt are charged to have refuſed the tendring of themſelves to the Trial of exorciſing. Thus alſo with the uſual Inconſiſtency of falſe Witneſſes, do the Writers againſt the Inſpir'd, with one and the ſame Breath affirm, That none of the *Montaniſts* ever ſuffer'd Martyrdom, and that many of them did ſo, as appears on Article X. Nevertheleſs, theſe here above-enumerated, are but a few of thoſe numerous Scandals, which by Report of *Apollonius*, were raked together, and heaped upon them: But *Apollonius* was not alone in that Practice, tho' the Biſhops of *Aſia*, in adhering to his, did in ſome Manner make the Defamations of that Writer, their own Act. For ſays the Author of *Montaniſm*, "the firſt who ſignalized himſelf in "this *Controverſy*, tho' he was not long alone in this War, "was St. *Apollinaris*, the celebrated Biſhop of *Hierapolis*, "who then deſerved the Title of *moſt bleſſed*, and in the "ſucceeding Times, he was look'd upon by the Church, as "a Man worthy of all Praiſes, as a Biſhop whoſe Memo-"ry was holy, as a glorious Ornament of Prelates, and as "one of the firmeſt and moſt invincible Supporters of the "Church againſt Hereſy." Yet after all, the Proſecution of the inſpir'd even by falſe Reports, was by this ſo celebrated a Perſon, uſher'd in with the falſe Imputation charged in the Tenth Article. Neither was that the ſingle Point, wherein he favour'd and admitted, or took up an evil Report againſt the Perſons accuſed by him; for in *Euſebius* he ſays, *Whilſt they charge us with the Death of the Prophets*, Montanus *and* Maximilla *are ſaid to die a very different Kind of Death from Martyrdom; for they ſay, that both theſe, thro' the Motion of their mad Spirit, did hang themſelves ſeverally, and not at one and the ſame Time.* And touching this latter Report ſo vented, the Hiſtorian of *Montaniſm* himſelf does anſwer, ſaying, "St. *Apollinaris* lived to ſee little more than "the Riſe of this Sect; for he dy'd before the End of the "Second Century, and moſt probably as the Criticks are "able to judge, before the Year 180. but *Maximilla* lived "to about the Year 220.

§ 11. It is written in *Exod.* xxiii. 1. *Thou ſhalt not receive a falſe Report, or put thine Hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous Witneſs.* And again, a righteous Man, *Pſal.* xv. 3. is deſcribed to be one who doth not take up a Reproach again his Neighbour. Moreover, by the New Teſtament, nothing is more diſagreeable to the Evangelical Law, than ſlandering, lying, and bearing falſe Witneſs. In particular,

lar, by the Gospel-Constitution, Ministers Wives are not to be *Slanderers*, the *Greek* is, *Devils*, 1 *Tim.* iii. 11. Wherefore it is not supposible there, that ever Gospel-Ministers themselves could be such; and especially because there is the highest Obligation possible to ingenious Minds, laid upon them, never to fall under that Character, seeing that the Holy Spirit has given an especial Charge to all that obey Him, not easily to admit an Accusation against an Elder, 1 *Tim.* v. 19. Yet after all, whether it be that there is some Way or other, to dispense with this Law of Christ, in the Case of Prophets, or whatever was the Meaning of it, the Fact is clear, from the Premises above-enumerated, that the Catholicks in the Age we are treating of, did not hold themselves bounden by it in this Case, any more than the *Jews*, who always persecuted their Prophets, after a like sort; altho' in respect to the stated Elder, they could allow themselves to add to the Word written, 1 *Tim.* xv. 9. the Clause, εκτος ει μη επι δυω η τριων μαρτυριων, *unless it be under two or three Witnesses*, as Dr. *Mills* assures us, from his Notes on the Text, and in his exquisite Preface.

§ 12. The last Chapter having given a distinct Account of the Reasons, Grounds and Motives, on which the Bishops, who excommunicated the *Montanists*, did proceed about *An.* 180. and the Defence of those Reasons being drawn up under each Article (for the most Part) as the same is recited by the Writer of the *History of Montanism*, the Reader now has a full State of the Case. The Author hereof has not wilfully omitted or suppressed any thing he could find in the said *History*, that could give a greater Weight to the Arguments of the *Apollinarian* Churches, nor misrepresented willingly any Part thereof. But as that Author constantly puts to the *Apollinarians* the Stile of *the Church*, it is not unworthy of Notice, that a celebrated Author, entitled, *An Enquiry into the Constitution, Discipline and Unity of the Primitive Church*, Printed *Anno* 1691. does assure us, that the Word, *Church*, tho' it be used sometimes to represent the Body invisible of Saints, and at other Times to express the Union of Faith and Doctrine in all Parts, yet it never once occurs in any of the Writers before *Constantine*, to signify a Collection of all particular Churches into one; but they always used the Stile of the *Churches* in the plural. And as we have endeavour'd also, to draw up on the other Side, what may be supposed for the Grounds and Reasons of the other Churches in *Asia*, *Africa* and *Europe*, why they did not concur in the Sentence, against the Prophets so condemn'd; he submits

mits the whole to a fair and equitable Conſideration, whether the Accuſers or the Juſtifiers of the Inſpir'd in thoſe Ages, did moſt proceed upon the Rules of God's Teſtimony of Himſelf, that is, the Standard of undoubtedly true Prophecy, in the ſacred Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament. But being himſelf perſwaded aſſuredly, that the *Apollinarians* did therein tranſact, without Warrant ſufficient from the Scripture, he thinks it to be evident that they were therein acted, by their own Luſts and Paſſions only, unto which the Spirit of Prophecy ſtood oppoſed.

§. 13. For whilſt the Matter was but in Embrio, and ſtood clear as the Noon-Day Sun, in the Point of ſound Doctrine, and good Life, on the Part of Prophecy, the Maligners of it however call'd the ſame, *the Phrygian Hereſy*, which is properly ſpeaking, a Condemnation before the Trial; which with other Things, plainly diſcovers, that the *Apollinarians* were a Sort of Chriſtians heartily diſpoſed and violently bent, to root out all Propheſying, without any equitable Will to diſtinguiſh the Divine Spirit from a Diabolical; becauſe that in the whole Proceſs of their Articles againſt the *Montaniſt*, there is nothing charged upon them, that carries the leaſt Appearance of Hereſy. The Foundation of the Proceſs being therefore entirely laid upon a notorious Falſity in this Point alſo by St. *Apollinaris*, we find it carried on by the ſame Principle of falſe accuſing, from the Beginning to the End; which is ſufficiently proved upon them from their own frequent Confeſſions, and from a clear Demonſtration of Facts, when they come to be enquir'd into. But the Sum of the Caſe at firſt being this, that the Clergy who roſe up againſt it, were offended with the Spirit of Prophecy, becauſe He reproved with an Authority that became Him, the Scandals in Life then obvious, and Want of Diſcipline in the Churches of *Phrygia*, upon ſhameleſs Profeſſors of the Chriſtian Name: And hereupon the Accuſed began the Practice of the *Jewiſh* Church of old, in hating the *Burden of the Lord.*

§ 14. And becauſe now-a-days, thro' the long Ceſſation of Prophecy, or rather (by the forecited Account) the anti-chriſtian Rejection of it, ſome may be ſo ignorant of the Word of God, as to think, that there was in thoſe Ages no Guilt in rejecting, or any Moral Obligation to ſubmit to the Spirit of Prophecy then exiſtent. It may ſerve for a Concluſion, to the Hiſtory of Prophecy uncontroverted

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in the Second Part of this Treatiſe, and that of the controverted in this Third Part thus far, if we here ſubjoin a ſhort View of what the Scriptures afford us upon this Head; not doubting, but it will be allowed, that the Chriſtian Church was equally bounden to honour, reverence, fear, love, and ſubmit to the Spirit of Prophecy, as ever the *Jewiſh* had been. And at the ſame Time, we muſt take for granted, that the Injunctions, Threatnings and Promiſes that relate to the owning or diſowning the Authority of God revealing, as they are found in the Old Teſtament, were none of the Ceremonial Laws of the *Jews*, which were abrogated by the Coming of our adored Saviour. And therefore whatever occurs of that kind, are permanently and eternally obliging, upon the Covenant People of God, as much under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, as they ever were to the antient *Iſrael*.

§ 15. *Firſt* then, let us call to Remembrance, what is written touching the Obligation incumbent on the Prophet himſelf. And herein we may for ſome Ages yet ſuppoſe ſome of the Churches in *Aſia*, *Africa* and *Europe*, pleading with the *Apollinarians*, in Reſpect to the rejected Prophets; We know not, Brethren, how ye pretend to limit the Word of the Lord, becauſe He has reproved ye by it, which ye call leſſening the Eſteem due to thoſe that ſit in the Chair of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles. Are ye more the Salt of the Earth, than the Apoſtles themſelves were, when our Great Prophet ſaid, *But if the Salt hath loſt its Savour, wherewith ſhall the Earth be ſalted, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be caſt out, and to be trodden under foot of Men*, Mat. v. 13. How dare ye imitate the *Jews*, or rather fulfil that Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, ſpoken of ſome, in Time to come, *Chap.* xxx. 9. 10. *This is a rebellious People, lying Children, Children that will not hear the Law of the Lord; which ſay to the See-ers, ſee not, and to the Prophets, propheſie not unto us right Things, ſpeak unto us ſmooth Things, propheſie Deceits.* Is it of ye, that the Apoſtle propheſied, ſaying, 2 *Tim.* iv. 3. *The Time will come, when they will not endure ſound Doctrine; but after their own Luſts, ſhall they heap to themſelves Teachers, having itching Ears?* If God has ſet us, as Watchmen over others, our Charter holds by no other Title, than that which the *Jewiſh* Prieſts had, of *hearkening to the Sound of the Trumpet*, Jer. vi. 17. and ſhall we ſay, *We will not hearken?* Take heed leſt the Voice of *Montanus* and others accuſe ye before God, as *Jeremiah*, ſaying, Ver. 10. 11. *To whom ſhall I ſpeak, and give Warning that they may hear? Behold, their Ear is*

(become)

(become) *uncircumciſed, and they cannot hearken: Behold, the Word of the Lord is unto them a Reproach; they have no Delight in it; therefore I am full of the Fury of the Lord, I am weary with holding in, I will pour it out upon the Children in the Streets,* &c.

§ 16. Ye plead indeed, that he and they wanted *ſufficient Credentials*; but then ye never explain what is meant by that Term, and we know that the *Jews* pleaded the ſame Thing in reſpect to our Lord, not eſteeming his Miracles ſuperior to thoſe of *Moſes*; therefore they never come to particularize what they expected for his ſufficient Credentials, till they had nailed Him to the Croſs, and then they impiouſly ſaid, *Let him come down thence, and we,* even we, *will believe on him.* It is not for us, Brethren, to preſcribe Laws and Conditions to our Maker; we are to take the Law from his Mouth, for our believing or disbelieving. They followed him with endleſs Objections and arbitrary Demands, even as far as *Golgotha*, and never limited themſelves to the Humility due on this Occaſion of being determined by the Rules, preſcribed by God Himſelf; we being therefore warned to call no Man Maſter in this Caſe, but to ſubmit to Chriſt as our ſole Maſter, and competent Teacher on the Point; we are in the ſame Danger of tempting Chriſt, as thoſe in the Wilderneſs, whoſe diſmal Example we have for our Admonition, if we deſpiſe his Authority *certainly divine*, in revealing, who is made a High-prieſt over us, after the Power of an endleſs Life, *Heb.* vii. 16. and *the more ſure Word of Prophecy, unto which* we are exhorted *to take heed*, 2 Pet. i. 19. refers as well, to the ſubſiſting Spirit of Prophecy at any Time, as to that preceding our Lord's Time.

§ 17. Therefore, inſtead of letting your own natural Paſſions work, upon the Occaſion of *Montanus*, with Prophetick Boldneſs reproving you, be pleas'd, Dear Brethren, to ſuffer a Word of Exhortation from us, your Fellow-Labourers; and therefore, let us conſider the Nature of a Prophetick Call, that it is compelling on the Perſon, and ought not by him to be ſuppreſſed, nor can without the moſt heavy Guilt; and therefore we ought not to be offended with him. We find, that even great Kings among the Heathen, as *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Abimelech*, *Belſhazzar*, and others, were ſo far from being angry, that they rewarded and honoured the Prophet, tho' delivering Meſſages direful to themſelves. The King of *Nineveh*, *Rehoboam*, and wicked *Ahab*, inſtead of perſecuting the Meſſengers, humbled

bled themſelves, upon their Declaration; and we could recite a great many Inſtances of this Sort, recorded for our Inſtruction, enough, if conſider'd, to ſhame your Perverſeneſs: But we rather chooſe to argue with you here, upon the Neceſſity incumbent on the Prophet, to ſubmit and yeild himſelf to the Celeſtial Command given; for it is prepoſterous for us to be angry with any Man for doing, what he is, and we in this Caſe ſhould be, indiſpenſibly bound to do. Therefore, if we believe the written Word, touching the Manner of the Word of the Lord, commiſſionating a Man to ſpeak in the Name of our Lawgiver; we muſt acknowledge, that he could not with Safety to himſelf, any more than we in like Caſe, juſtly decline it, as we gather from the Scripture enſuing: For in the Caſe of *Amos*, there ſeems to have been ſome Divine Enforcement, with Diſpleaſure annexed, where he ſaith, *Chap.* iii. 8. *The Lion hath rored, who will not fear? The Lord hath ſpoken, who can but propheſy?* And thus *Jeremiah* teſtifies of himſelf, *Chap.* xvii. 16. *I have not haſtned from being a Paſtor, to follow thee, neither have I deſired the woful Day, thou knoweſt; but, O Lord, thou art ſtronger than I, and haſt prevailed; for when I ſaid, I will not make Mention of Him, nor ſpeak any more in his Name,* (Chap. xx. 7, 9, 11.) *the Lord was with me as a mighty terrible one, and his Word was in mine Heart, as a burning Fire ſhut up in my Bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay.* To the ſame Effect, *Iſaiah* declares, *Chap.* l. 5. *The Lord God hath open'd mine Ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away backwards, but I gave my Back to the Smiters, and my Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair, I hid not my Face from Shame and Spitting.* And thus ſaith the Lord to *Ezekiel*, Chap. ii. 8. *Hear what I ſay unto thee, be not thou rebellious like that rebellious Houſe, but open thy Mouth, and eat that I give thee.*

§ 18. Now that theſe Inſtances aboveſaid, were real and no pretended Enforcements on the Prophet, we find abundantly corroborated by others, wherein the Infidelity of the Prophet was puniſhed; as *Firſt*, if ye compare *Numb.* xi. 21, 23. with xx. 12. ye may there ſee, that becauſe *Moſes* expreſſed ſome Doubt concerning the Divine Word, the Lord ſaid unto him and *Aaron, becauſe ye believ'd me not, therefore ye ſhall not bring this Congregation into the Land, which I have given them.* In 1 *Kings* xiii. 21, 22. The Man of God was ſlain by a Lion, becauſe he diſobeyed a Command, which he had receiv'd from the Mouth of the Lord to him. Thus

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was alſo *Zacharias* ſtricken deaf and dumb, becauſe he believ'd not the Word of an Angel. St. *Paul* therefore mentions it, as a Thing unreprovable to him, that he was not diſobedient to the Heavenly Viſion. Why then ſhould we load Men with heavy Imputations for that which the Text repreſents in the higheſt Manner, as their Duty, or ours on like Occaſion; and treat the ſame Thing, as a Crime, which our God declares to be in *Abraham*, the Foundation of that unparallel'd Bleſſing, *Gen.* xxii. 18. *In thy Seed ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed, becauſe thou haſt obeyed my Voice.* Wherefore, we beſeech you, Brethren, let us not ſo invert or pervert the Scriptures, as if the Examples therein of Contempt and Diſobedience to the Prophetick Spirit, were rather to be copyed after, than the contrary ones, that are recommended by Him who is Wiſdom, with the higheſt ennobling Praiſes. For if we read attentively the Elogies of the antient Worthies, in *Heb.* xi. we find little elſe, but the Commendation of the ſame Faith of our Father *Abraham* above-cited, in that noble Regiſter of the Faithful to God, in the ſeveral Divine Vouchſafements unto them; for theſe all obtained thro' Faith, a good Report and Heavenly Teſtimonies from God, under the Trial of cruel Mockings from Men.

§ 19. Ye tell us indeed often, Brethren, of our Lord's Caution to beware of *falſe Prophets*; and we agree with you, whenſoever the Scripture denominates them ſo; for theſe, that is, *falſe Prophets* are deſcrib'd to us always to be ſuch as ſeduce from the bliſsful Ways of God, and lead Men into erring from the Word; but in the Caſe of the *Montaniſts* before us, there is nothing like unto any thing of this Kind, laid to their Charge. Now therefore, becauſe ye are conſtantly harping upon the Miſapplication of thoſe Texts, we fear ye need to be reminded on the other Side, what without any Need of wreſting, is as worthy of your Regard in the Scriptures. Tell us therefore, then, if ye have diligently ſearched and numbred the Texts, how often it is repeated, *Hear ye the Word of the Lord*, both in the Old and New Teſtament too? Thus, of all the Churches in *Chriſtendom*, ye in *Aſia* ſhould not forget the Words ſo often in the Second and Third Chapter of St. *John*'s *Revelations*, *He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches.* We would recite more from the Old Teſtament, of poſitive Commands to this Effect, but a Redundancy of the New does excuſe the Need of it: Only there-

therefore recollect that happy Diſpoſition of *Moſes*, expreſſed to *Joſhua*, Numb. xi. 29. *Envieſt thou for my Sake? Would God that all the Lord's People were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.* Let us conſider then, for our ſeaſonable Admonition, what our Saviour ſaid to thoſe who taxed him with having a Devil, *Mat.* xii. 32, 36. *Whoſoever ſpeaketh a Word againſt the Son of Man, it ſhall be forgiven him; but whoſoever ſpeaketh againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiven him, neither in this Age,* (αιωνος,) *nor in the Age to come; but every idle Word that Men ſhall ſpeak* (on this Head) *they ſhall give an Account thereof, in the Day of Judgment:* And in that Day, it ſhall be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, than for the City, which ſhall not receive you my Meſſengers, *Chap.* x. 1, 14, 15. wherefore, we exhort you to reflect on theſe Things, leſt ye be Partakers of like Crimes, and be found fighting againſt God.

§. 20. We find a Temper recommended to our Imitation, in *Mark* xii. 37, *Acts* ii. 41. of hearing and receiving the Prophetick word *Gladly*, as an acceptible Benefit from the propitious Father of Spirits; whereas the contrary to this Temper ſeems to be reproved in that Expoſtulation, *Mic.* ii. 7. *O thou that art Named the Houſe of Jacob, is the Spirit of the Lord,* (and not rather yours) *ſtreightned? do not my Words do good to him that walketh uprightly?* Thus we are taught by our Saviour, according to our Bibles, in *Luke* xi. 2. to pray, *may thy Holy Spirit come upon us,* (Mills's *Preface*, p. 77.) and in the ſubſequent Diſcourſe of our Bleſſed Redeemer, we are thereto encouraged; ſince if it be inconſiſtent with Parental Tenderneſs among Men, to give a ſupplicant Child a Scorpion for an Egg, *How much more* (ſays he) *ſhall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit* (and not a Devil) *to them that ask him?* And thus we find, that not only for ourſelves, may we ſo Pray, but for others, as the Apoſtle did for the *Samaritans*, Acts viii. 15. according to the Heroick Zeal of *Moſes*. Moreover, the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles* has left us a Command, 1 *Cor.* xii. 31, 14, i. 12. *To covet earneſtly the beſt Gifts, to deſire Spirits, and to be zealous in our Requeſts* (unto God for them) *that we may excel to the Edifying of the Church.* And in ſome of our Sacred Records, that of *Gal.* iv. 18. runs thus, *Zealouſly do ye affect the more excellent Gifts, for it is good to be zealouſly affected always in a good Thing.* Therefore Brethren, ſince the *Montaniſts* upbraid you, for having deſpiſed the Spirit, and thereby loſt it, be provoked to a Holy Emulation, to be importunately fervent with Our Father

ther in Heaven, to reſtore to you that good Thing, that beſt of Gifts, the Spirit. We beſeech you Brethren, for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt's Sake, and for the Love of the Spirit, that ye ſtrive together with us, in your Prayers unto God, on this Account. *And may the word of Chriſt dwell in you* (and us) *richly, in all Wiſdom; Teaching and Admoniſhing one another in Pſalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*, Col. iii. 16.

§. 21. Wiſdom is one of the Nobleſt of all Prophetick Gifts, and concerning this we have the encouraging News by St. *James*, that God upbraideth not for asking ſo great a Benefit, nor for our Poverty in wanting it, but is ready to give liberally; and St. *Peter* tells us, the Promiſe of giving the Holy Ghoſt is made to all, even to them that *were afar off, as many as the Lord our God ſhall call*, Acts ii. 39. Wherefore, let us Brethren, look with Hope unto that Promiſe, in *Iſa.* lix. 21. *This is my Covenant with Jacob, ſaith the Lord; my Spirit that is upon thee, and my Words which I have put in thy Mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seeds Seed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* We then, as the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, have a Claim to this Promiſe; and as God giveth liberally living Water to the Thirſty after it, and upbraideth not on one ſide, for our importunate knocking at his Gate for Wiſdom; ſo in *Prov.* viii. He does upbraid on the other, for our Contempt of it; for in that place we read, that Knowledge Spiritual, is to be ſought preferably to choice Gold, and ſuch Wiſdom is incomparably better than Rubies, and all deſirable Things; therefore does He, the eſſential Word and Wiſdom, who was before the Creation, ſay there, I love them that love me, and thoſe who ſeek me early ſhall find me; I lead in the Paths of right Judgment, and do cauſe thoſe that love me to inherit Subſtance, and will fill their Treaſure, for my Delights are with the Sons of Men. Now therefore, ſaith He there alſo, hearken unto me, O ye Children, the teachable ſhall be taught of me; the humble Soul will I ſatiate with good; the meek of the Earth ſhall encreaſe in Knowledge; Watching at my Gates ye ſhall be Bleſſed; liſten to my Inſtruction and be wiſe, and refuſe it not; if any Man open his Ear, I will come in and dwell with him, for I rejoice in the habitable Part of the Earth, and they that be wiſe thus, ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever, *Dan.* xii. 3.

§ 22.

§. 22. Thus much have we ſaid, Brethren, to put you in Remembrance of the Tenour of the Covenant of Promiſe, and on what Terms the great Promiſe of the Father unto the Church on Earth, is rightfully to be expected by us; we dare not limit the Almighty, who can ſtrike ye down to the Earth, as He did *Saul* the Perſecutor of Him, and can give Gifts to the Rebellious alſo at his Sovereign Pleaſure. But becauſe in the laſt words of your Plea for rejecting Prophetick Inſpiration, *ye have judged it incompatible with the Charter of the Catholick Church, which had receiv'd the right of Judicature over Spirits, and to which all the Promiſes do rightfully belong*; we have ſaid enough already, that ye have no Title to aſſume to your ſelves the Style of the Catholick Church; and that the Right of Judicature over Spirits, belongs to Chriſt the Head, who from his Chair and Tribunal ſupreme, adminiſters the ſame by the Prophetick Spirit, in the Gift of diſcerning, ye your ſelves have amply confeſſed before; we are now reminding ye, by what Charter, all the Covenant Promiſes of God, do belong to his Church, and the Terms of it we have from Scripture ſhewn to be an Obedience to, and reverential Fear of his Prophetick Voice; we have ſet before ye, the Tenour of that Charter or Covenant, in the Point before us, *viz.* that on the Church's Part an Obſequiouſneſs to her Lord and Husband is required, as always was from his former Church, the *Jewiſh*, in the Place of which we now ſtand; we have ſet before you, the Terms on which the Spirit extraordinarily was ever promiſed, that is, to the Seed of *Abraham*, who firſt receiv'd the Promiſe, that *all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed in him, becauſe he believ'd and obey'd the Voice of God revealing*. So long then, as the Church of Chriſt continues with the Quality of the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, by Faith in Chriſt revealing, and bleſſing her with his abiding Preſence, we agree with you, that all the Promiſes do rightfully belong to her, as to the Children of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, Acts iii. 25. But do ye think, the Promiſes belong to thoſe who do not lay hold on them by Faith, or that *the Gift of the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation for the Acknowledgment of him*, Eph. i. 17. will be granted on the Apoſtle's Prayers, without yours alſo, to that Purpoſe? We have ſet before you, that the Promiſe of the Spirit to the Church, is joined with Commands, to ſeek the ſame by Prayer; by Prayer importunate and fervent, and under the Condition of little Children, teachable of God, in the Poſture of waiting Supplicants at the

Gates of Wiſdom, and always invigorated by Faith on the Promiſes of it. Thus then our Saviour Himſelf, *John* vii. 38, 39. annexes the Promiſe of the Spirit, to the Faith on Him, as the Giver of it; and in the Third and Fourth Chapters of the *Hebrews*, we are warned of faltering in this Faith, by the Example of the unbelieving *Iſraelites*; *for*, ſays he, *we are made Partakers of Chriſt, if we hold the Beginning of our Confidence ſtedfaſt unto the End; while it is ſaid, to Day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts*, Heb. iii. 14. In this Text, our being made Partakers of Chriſt, is limited to the Condition of our holding faſt our Confidence on Him, ſtedfaſt unto the End; but without hearing his Voice, and if we harden our Hearts againſt it, the Promiſe given in *Mat.* xxviii. 20. of Chriſt's being with us *always*, πασας τας ημερας, may ceaſe, as the Promiſe to *David*, 1 *Kings* xi. 36. expreſſed in the ſame Terms, did; or even as that alſo, made to *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* ix. 3. *I will hallow this Houſe*, (the Temple) *to put my Name there for ever*, εις τον αιωνα, *and mine Eyes and my Heart ſhall be there*, πασας τας ημερας, *perpetually*; yet we ſee before our Eyes, the Deſolations of that Place, for the very Crime of rejecting the Prophets: And is it not then, high Time, Brethren, to fear, that the Temple of God with us, may alſo become deſtituted of his Preſence Prophetical, and afterwards deſolate, upon our grieving and Deſpite done in like Manner, to the Holy Spirit? ſince we have no further Security from that in *Mat.* xxviii. 20. *I am with you always, even unto the End of the World*, than what was given to the *Jews*, in as clear Terms, 1 *Kings* ix. 3. which nevertheleſs is for their Sins, now long ſince deplorably failed. Wherefore, it behoves us, before it be too late, to remember *Iſa.* vii. 9. *If ye will not believe, ſurely ye ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.* And as the Phraſe, πασας τας ημερας, literally ſignifies *all the Days*, and is a Definition of Time, determinable by the ſecret Council of God, let us therefore take it as it is rendred *Iſa.* lxiii. 9. where it is added, unto the 14th Verſe, that *He who put his holy Spirit within that People, and lead them by it, as a Man* (a ſuperior Nature) *leads an Horſe, and guides him; when the* then *Church rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit*, for that very reaſon, *He turned to be their Enemy, and He fought againſt them.* So that we have little reaſon to preſume upon Chriſt's Preſence with us any longer, than we honour and eſteem his Spirit Prophetical abiding, from his Promiſe to be with us, *all the Days*, ſince the Words, πασας τας ημερας, ſignify, and are rendred no more than ſo in 2 *Kings* xiii. 3. alſo.

§ 23.

§ 23. As to your high Pretenſions for the Name of the Church, we find the *Levitical* Prieſthood never made more a Noiſe about theirs, than when they were actually denying the Word of the Lord, in the Prophet: Thus in *Jer.* v. 11--18. *The Houſes of Iſrael and Judah, have dealt very treacherouſly againſt me, ſaith the Lord; they have belied the Lord, and ſaid it is not he; neither ſhall Evil come upon us; and the Prophets ſhall become Wind, and the Word is not in them. Wherefore, becauſe they ſpeak this Word, I will bring a deſolating Nation upon them; nevertheleſs in theſe Days, I will not make a full end of them.* Theſe therefore continu'd the Church of God, tho' they dealt treacherouſly, and bely'd the Lord ſpeaking by *Jeremiah*, and had framed ſuch Syſtems touching Prophecy, that they ſaid, it was not He, nor was it the Word of the Lord in *Jeremiah* and the reſt; but ſaid they, *Chap.* xviii. 18. *Come, and let us deviſe Devices againſt* Jeremiah, *for the Law ſhall not periſh from the Prieſt, nor Council from the Wiſe, nor the Word from the Prophet* (*by whoſe Means we bear Rule*, Chap. v. 31) *Come let us ſmite him with the Tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his Words. And now, becauſe* (Chap. vii. 13--28.) *ſaith the Lord, I ſpake unto you, riſing up early, and ſpeaking, but ye heard not; I call'd you, but ye anſwer'd not; therefore will I do unto this Houſe* (the Temple) *which is call'd by my Name, wherein you truſt, as I have done to* Shiloh, *and I will caſt you out of my Sight. For I ſpake not unto your Fathers, nor commanded them* (comparatively) *concerning Sacrifices or burnt Offerings, but this thing commanded I them, ſaying, obey my Voice,* (at all times) *and I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my People. But thou* (Jeremiah) *ſhalt ſay unto them, this is a Nation that obeyeth not the Voice of the Lord, nor receiveth Correction* (from it, and thus) *Truth is periſh'd, and is cut off from their Mouth. How then do ye ſay,* (Chap. viii. 8, 9.) *we are wiſe, and the Law of the Lord is with us? lo, certainly the falſe* (forging) *Pen of the Scribes worketh for Falſhood* (in vain) *the Wiſe Men are aſhamed, they are diſmay'd and taken; lo, they have rejected the Word of the Lord, and what Wiſdom is in them?*

§ 24. Ye have here, Brethren, a Pattern of the ſad Fruits, of human Wiſdom and vain Philoſophy, *a Science* falſly ſo called, when it's employed by the Scribe, to draw up Rules, to judge of the Spirit of Prophecy by; for to the ſame effect, we have it charg'd upon them, in *Iſa.* xl. 13, 14. lxv. 2. *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his Councellor hath taught him? With whom took he Council, and*

who instructed him, and taught him in the Path of Judgment, and taught him Knowledge, and shew'd to him the Way of Understanding? I have spread out my Hands, all the Day, unto a rebellious People, which walketh after their own Thoughts. Ye see Brethren, the Character of a rebellious People, is here defined, by offering to prescribe, instruct and teach, the Spirit of Prophecy, and walking after *their own Thoughts*, in rejecting it. Do not therefore ye run headlong into the same pernicious Measures, with Respect to it; for if ye do, ye will stand but in the Place, of the Rebellious House of *Israel*, altho' ye may apropriate to your selves loudly, the Stile of *the Church*; as *they trusted in lying Words, saying, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these, Jer.* vii. 4. We for our Parts, do adhere to the Definition of the Church, taken from the Spirit of Prophecy it self, which remains among us to this Day; and if *Justin Martyr* and others, did rightly argue against the *Jews*, that the Christian Church was manifested to stand in the Place of the *Jewish*, by the Spirit prophetick, residing with us instead of them; we may, upon the same Foot of Argument plead, that ye are but a rebellious House, and not the true *Israel*, the Church. Wherefore if ye will obey the Voice of the Lord among us, by the Prophets which we own, and do submit to receive Correction from it, ye must then receive again into Communion, those ye say, the Lord hath not spoken by. But if ye do not; then, however Orthodox in other Points, *Truth in this is perish'd, and is cut off from your Mouth*; and tho' your Sacrifices be no other, than what God Himself appointed, yet He disowns that ever He requir'd any, in Comparison of Obedience to his immediate Voice. In like Manner ye may dote upon Wisdom among Men reputed, but there is no Wisdom properly, which turns against the Lord, in this very Point. *Corah* and his Confederates were *Israelites* as well as the rest, but if we will subscribe to the Definition given by God Himself of Rebellion, then let us hear what *Samuel* said; *hath the Lord as great Delight in burnt Offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the Voice of the Lord? Behold! to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken, than the Fat of Rams. For Rebellion is, as the Sin of Witchcraft; and Stubbornes is as Idolatry; because thou* (therefore *Sau*) *hast rejected the Word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being King*, 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.

§ 25. But whereas ye have rejected Prophecy among ye, it must be upon one of these three Principles; either by the prophetick Gift of Discernment; and this ye do not at all pretend

pretend to; or *Secondly*, becauſe it is condemn'd, by Scripture Teſtimony, and the general Rules there found; but this we have diſtinctly upon every Article examin'd, and found your Sentence without Warrant from; or *Thirdly*, from an arbitrary Authority lodg'd in ye; and this alſo *Laſtly*, we have now made appear, there never was, nor is any Scripture Charter for, and therefore we reject it, as an Uſurpation upon Chriſt the Head in whom alone the Body can be united, and ſo rightly call'd his Church. But leſt Brethren, we ſhould be acceſſory to your Guilt, in the introducing of an Authority into the Church, which oppoſes and is contrary to, the Divine Legiſlator of it, we do here ſet before ye, the lamentable Iſſue of ſuch rebellious Courſes, in the Antient Church of God. If then your Ears are not yet become quite uncircumciſed, hearken to the Word of the Lord, in *Amos* viii. 9, 11. *It ſhall come to paſs in that Day, ſaith the Lord God, that I will cauſe the Sun to go down at Noon, and I will darken the Earth in the clear Day: Behold I will ſend a Famine in the Land, not a Famine of Bread; nor a Thirſt for Water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord; for they ſhall run, to and fro, to ſeek the Word of the Lord, and ſhall not find it.* To the ſame Effect, is that in *Jer.* xxiii. 33--40. *when this People, or the Prophet, or the Prieſt ſhall ask thee* (Jeremiah) *what is the Burden of the Lord? Thou ſhalt then ſay unto them, What Burden? I will even forſake you, ſaith the Lord. Thus ſhall ye ſay, what hath the Lord anſwer'd? And what hath the Lord ſpoken? And the* BURDEN *of the Lord ſhall ye mention no more. For ye have perverted the Words of the living God, of the Lord of Hoſts, our God. But becauſe ye will ſay, the Burden of the Lord; therefore, behold, I, even I will utterly forget you, and I will forſake you, and caſt you out of my Preſence. And I will bring an everlaſting Reproach upon you, and a perpetual Shame.* Here Brethren, was the Sentence of God pronounc'd prophetically, upon thoſe who hated Prophecy, perverted the Words of it, and eſteem'd it a heavy Load upon them, as the Devil ſecretly incites Men to eſteem it, being the perpetual Maligner of Man's Happineſs; the Puniſhment threatned is, God's forgetting them, forſaking of them, and at length caſting them out of his Preſence, by withdrawing the Light of the Sun, the Word of the Lord, or Spirit of Prophecy, the ſhining Token of his Preſence with the Church, which is a Woman cloathed with the Sun.

§ 26. But to conclude now from ſome of the laſt Records left us, of the Hiſtory of the Old Teſtament, let us read

2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 10, 11. xxxvi. 15, 16. *The Lord God of their Fathers, ſent to them by his Meſſengers, riſing up betimes and ſending; becauſe he had Compaſſion on his People, and on his dwelling Place; but they mock'd the Meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his Words, and miſuſed his Prophets, until the Wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his People, and there was no Remedy. And the Lord ſpake to Manaſſeh, and to his People, but they would not hearken; wherefore the Lord brought upon them the Aſſyrians, and they were carried to Babylon.* After they had taſted the bitter Fruit of their own rebellious Folly, a Lamentation for it follows in *Nehemiah* ix. 20, 26, 30. *Thou gaveſt alſo thy good Spirit to inſtruct them, and withheldeſt not thy MANNA, from their Mouth. Nevertheleſs they were diſobedient, and rebelled againſt thee, and caſt thy Law behind their Backs, and ſlew thy Prophets which teſtified againſt them, to turn them to thee, and they wrought great Provocations; yet many Years didſt thou forbear them, and teſtifyedſt againſt them by thy Spirit, in the Hand of thy Prophets; yet would they not give Ear; therefore gaveſt thou them into the Hand of the People of the Lands.* And *Laſtly*, take an Account of the Sum of the Matter, and Execution of the Sentence pronounc'd by *Amos* and *Jeremiah* beforehand, from *Zech.* vii. 11--13, *they refus'd to hearken, and pull'd away the Shoulder, and ſtop'd their Ears that they ſhould not hear: Yea, they made their Hearts as an Adamant Stone, leſt they ſhould hear the Words, which the Lord of Hoſts hath ſent in his Spirit, by the Hand of his former Prophets; therefore came a great Wrath from the Lord of Hoſts; therefore, IT IS COME TO PASS, that as He cried and they would not hear, ſo they cried, and I would not hear, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* This ſame *Zechariah* the Son of *Berachiah* they ſlew between the Temple and the Altar, *Math.* xxiii. 35, becauſe they eſteem'd Prophecy, the Burthen of the Lord, and a dead Weight upon them; wherefore the Lord forſook them, and caſt them out of his Preſence, and withdrew his Spirit from them, and there is a Famine of the Word upon them, even from that Day to this.

§ 27. And now Brethren, we ought to do that Juſtice to God's antient Church among the *Jews*, that tho' they could not ſuffer the Word of the Lord, by Reaſon of ſome harſhneſs in the Subject of its Reproof, to the living Generation; and they found ſomewhat in the Manner of it on the Prophet, that juſtified before Men their rejecting of him, yet they did never condemn Prophecy it ſelf. In like Manner, whatever ſucceeding Ages in the Chriſtian Church

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may do, we do readily own, Brethren, that ye alſo in rejecting thoſe ſent unto you, do not deny Prophecy to be exiſtent, nor paſs a Sentence upon our Churches for owning it to be ſo; neither do ye, any more than the *Jews*, condemn Prophecy it ſelf, abſolutely, (but ſuch only as is among ye,) as if it were incompatible with the Charter of the Catholick Church. Nevertheleſs, ſince the Grounds whereon ye have built your Rejection of the *Montaniſts*, are ſuch as are not warrantable by the written Word, nor approved by the ſurviving Spirit of Prophecy, and are juſtifyed only upon the Foot of precarious Opinions in ſome Churches newly receiv'd; we fear greatly, that theſe Grounds and Opinions foiſted in by the Devil, the Slanderer of God to Men, will prove, in the Effect, the extinguiſhing of the prophetick Spirit, where they are receiv'd, and do prevail to become the Rules and Preſidents, whereon to judge and condemn the Spirit of Prophecy; and by theſe Means, the Wrath of the Lord, after much long ſuffering, may be ſo provoked, that He may alſo at length utterly forſake Chriſtians, and caſt them out of his Preſence too, with reſpect to the prophetick Teſtimonies of it. Under the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, we the preſent Covenant People of God, and the Children of Promiſe, are not indeed embodyed into a national Polity, as the *Jews* were, and therefore cannot apprehend, how we ſhould be capable of a local Captivity, like to that of the Children of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, in *Babylon*: However we have fair Warning, from the Book of the *Revelations* of St. *John*, of ſomething that will ariſe within the Chriſtian Church it ſelf, that is to bear a Parallel, to that Captivity of the *Jews* in *Babylon*. We read there alſo of a War, to be made upon thoſe that have the Teſtimony of Jeſus, that is, the Spirit of Prophecy upon them, even after that the Woman repreſenting the true Church, fled into the Wilderneſs. Now whatever theſe things may hereafter prove, that are couched in figurative Obſcurities, we cannot but with much Concern hear, that among you who reject the *Montaniſts*, the ſaid prophetick Book of the New Teſtament, is falling daily into more and more Diſgrace, even ſo far, that ſome among ye, do not already ſtick to impute it, to the Dictate of the unclean Spirit of *Cerinthus*.

§ 28. Ye may think the Catholick Church, ſecure againſt the Evils above mention'd, to have attended the *Jewiſh*, becauſe they are always charged by the Prophets, to be prone to Idolatry, which the Chriſtian Church unto

theſe our Days, has no Appearance of; but pray conſider Brethren, that their very Zeal for the Temple Service, as the ſame was perverſly conſtrued, did make the ſtanding Inſtitution of God a Cloak, for their rejecting the Prophet, as if the latter deſpiſed it. In like Manner ye have advanced ſome parallel Principles, as if the Conſtitution of the ſtated Clergy, were neceſſarily brought into Contempt by, and the Honour due to it, incompatible with Prophecy proper. This has ſo near a Reſemblance to the Pleas of the *Levitical* Prieſthood, violently always urged, for their rejecting the Prophets ſent them; that we cannot tell, but if ever the Wrath of the Lord ariſes againſt the Chriſtian Church, on the ſame Account, there may ſomething alſo riſe up in it, which may likewiſe bear a Parallel to their Inclination to Idolatry, in God's Account. And this we have the more Reaſon to fear, becauſe we are told by St. *Paul*, 2 *Theſ.* ii. 4. of *a Man of Sin to be revealed, who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf, above all that is called God, or that is worſhipp'd; ſo that he as God, ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God.* 'Tis true indeed, that no ſuch thing is as yet clearly diſcloſed and apparent, in the Chriſtian Church, and we are willing to confine our Arguments with you, to the State of the Matter, at preſent under Debate; wherefore having lightly touch'd, upon the Hiſtory of the antient Church, unto whom the Goſpel was preach'd as well as unto us, we have laid before you, an abbreviated Pattern of their Unbelief, and the fatal Conſequences of it; hoping it may not be unuſeful to prevent in ye, any Steps that may draw the like, in Times to come, upon the Churches of Chriſt.

§ 29. In the laſt deſolating Judgment on the *Jews*, much worſe than that of their Captivity in *Babylon*, our Lord ſays, *all the righteous Blood ſhed upon the Earth, even the Blood of all the Prophets ſhed from the Foundation of the World*, was to be requir'd of that Generation. To the like Effect, *Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the Earth*, is to be *drunk with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Witneſſes of Jeſus*; ſo that when the *King of Kings* whoſe Name is *the WORD of God*, makes War upon her, there will be found in her, the Blood of Prophets and of Saints, and of all that were ſlain upon the Earth. We know not, but in the Prophetick Stile, and in God's Account, the Prophets are ſaid to be ſlain, when their Teſtimony of Jeſus is rejected, and their Mouths ſtopped by a Sentence of the then Church; we now therefore once more

beg

beg of ye, Brethren, to hold your Hands, leſt they be embrewed in the Blood of Prophets; but if your Ears are become quite deaf upon this Subject, at leaſt compaſſionate the common State of Chriſtians, which is like to be endanger'd, by theſe Courſes of yours; for in your furious Zeal againſt them, ye have paſſed a Sentence upon a conſiderable Part of the Believers in Jeſus, and where-ever your Power reaches, ye have now firſt, without any Preſident ever heard of in the Chriſtian Church, excomunicated Perſons, who are by your own Confeſſion, in all things as ſound in Doctrine, and in Strictneſs of Life, more holy than your ſelves. If then your Authority be ſo abſolute now, that ye do arbitrarily exclude from the Communion of the Church, even Prophets, who by an Authority above your own have reproved ye, and this without being able to prove any Error doctrinal, or any Immorality whatſoever, upon them; who ſhall hereafter ſtand up againſt ſuch Maſters in the Church, who may call any Man a Heretick that diſpleaſes them, and even if they pleaſe, may excommunicate for no other Cauſe, then that he is a Saint? as *Plutarch* tells us of a Fellow, that was for baniſhing *Ariſtides* out of *Athens*, meerly and only becauſe he was *deadly juſt*.

§ 30. Well Brethren, we have now finiſh'd our Remonſtrance and Proteſtation, againſt your Proceedings, and conclude with this one Word; that Prophecy from the beginning of the World to this Day, is repreſented to us from ſacred Authority, to be a Teſtimony of Jeſus, and touching Chriſt the Meſſiah; ſo that the main Current of our Examination, ought to run in this Channel, thereby to decide whether it be true or falſe; accordingly we have narrowly ſifted, that of the *Montaniſt* Prophets, which ye have condemn'd; and do find that the Spirit ſpeaking thro' their Organs, who is adjudg'd by you for a diabolical One, has conſtantly witneſſed to all the glorious Things, ſaid in the Scriptures, touching the Meſſiah; inſomuch that ye your ſelves cannot charge him, with the leaſt Omiſſion or Defect in this Point, on the one ſide, nor on the other with any Extravagances of Doctrine, mixed and ſuperadded, to thoſe in the Scripture, on the ſame Head; but all things in the latter Inſpiration, being conſonant and agreable to the Teſtimony of the former undoubtedly true Prophets; we cannot underſtand, how the ſacred Text has its due Honour, of being the Standard to try other Things by, if in this great Point, we grant unto you that it is defective and incompetent, and needs to be ſupplied by human Wiſdom

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and arbitrary Opinions; or in its clear Dictates, is to be controuled and ſuperſeded, by Rules of Man's Invention. Therefore ſince the Caſe before us, is, touching Perſons prophetical, and acted by a Spirit apparently, who by that Spirit are led to proclaim more explicitly the ſeveral Glories and high Prerogatives of Chriſt our Head and Redeemer, High-prieſt and great Prophet, contained more concisely and therefore obſcurely in the Scripture; we cannot but as on the one Side, ſubſcribe to the Determination, by St. *Peter*, that *no Prophecy of the Scripture is of any private Interpretation*, or can be concluſively fixed by the Knowledge, which is meerly human; ſo on the other, when ſpiritual Perſons or prophetical, that is, ſuch as are moved and acted apparently by a Spirit, do openly urge and teſtify at large the Glories of our Saviour, we muſt alſo ſubſcribe to that of St. *Paul, that no Man can ſay, that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Cor. xii. 3.

CHAP. IV.

Of PROPHECY, *Controverted in the* Second *and* Third Century.

§ 1. HItherto we have inſiſted upon thoſe, which are alledg'd to be *the principal Grounds and Reaſons*, whereon the Biſhops of *Aſia* went in the Excommunication of the Prophets and their Adherents. But as *ſome leſſer* Reaſons are intimated, I would gladly give the utmoſt Latitude to this Affair; and therefore, for the Reader's further Information, theſe latter may poſſibly be, what followeth. *Firſt*, The Sixth Article having repreſented them as deſervedly odious, for being more holy than other Chriſtians, the Offence that ſeems to have been in this, was, that they did not content themſelves with that Happineſs, but urged the ſame upon others, even with vehement Reproofs of the Spirit, for their Looſeneſs and Degeneracy. For, ſays Dr. *Hicks*, " *Montanus* being one of the moſt ſtrict Sect of " the Apoſtolicals, and in all Things zealous for the Laws " and Cuſtoms of the Church: *He continued* a moſt dili- " gent Obſerver of all its Diſcipline, and a mighty Stick- " ler for reſtoring (in others) the decay'd Spirit and Life of " Chriſtianity. And as he had a Zeal very extraordinary " for that holy Religion, into which he was baptiz'd, he

" would

" would needs ſet up for a mighty *Reformer* in the Church, " how impracticable ſoever, ſo good an End might ap- " pear. And thus in his Zeal for the Eſtabliſhment of the " Churches, according to the moſt perfect Model, that he " might bring them back to their *firſt Love*, and ſtrength- " en the Things that were *ready to die*, he gave Way to a " diſorderly Ambition after the Dignities of the Church. " And as he was indefatigable in what he once nndertook " to promote, ſo there was likewiſe ſuch an Opiniativeneſs " and Inflexibility in his Temper, as nothing could ever " bend." Now, tho' I believe, that the Character here given might be found very agreeable to that of *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, and other Prophets, whoſe Faces are ſaid to be hardned as Flint, and their Obſtinacy (thro' the Divine Power on them) compared to a Wall of Braſs; and as even the Apoſtles had a Sort of *Boldneſs*, aſtoniſhing to the Beholders; and tho' the End herein mention'd to be purſued, is no other than what all the Prophets in Scripture might have been charged withal, as alſo the extraordinary Manner of Zeal, wherewith that End was purſued, is no leſs agreeable to the true Meſſengers of God, and the efficacious Energy working on them; even as 'tis worded in *Jer.* vi. 11. *I am full of the Fury of the Lord*, and *Ezekiel* went in *hot Anger or the Heat of his Spirit*, Chap. iii. 14. And thus in *Gal.* ii. 8. it is ſaid, that God *wrought effectually in Peter*, and *was mighty in Paul*, where the Word ενεργησε, ſo rendred, does properly ſignify the Operation of a Spirit in them, vehement and ſtrong, like one poſſeſſed. Nevertheleſs, becauſe we have largely treated of this Matter in the Firſt Part, as alſo by reaſon, that the whole of this Article, is mention'd but as a leſſer reaſon of condemning him, I ſhall add no more in my Defence of the Spirit of Prophecy, on this Point. Therefore to proceed,

§ 2. We have another reaſon for condemning them given us, thus; " *Montanus* being acted by a Spirit of Deluſion, " did but diſturb the World, and unprofitably amuſe and " perplex People's Minds with vain Fancies, and the Expe- " ctation of wonderful approaching Revolutions, even no " leſs than the total Change of all things *quickly*; *there- " fore the Catholicks fear'd not to forbid him, to ſpeak any more " by that Spirit*; but his Mind being intoxicated with high " Notions, he went up and down, and drew after him cer- " tain religious Melancholiſts. *Maximilla* propheſied of " the pouring forth of the laſt Judgment upon the World, " and of ſuch dreadful Calamities, as never had been be-

fore,

" fore, from the Foundation of it; but that even then,
" there ſhould be a Hiding-place for the Elect and Spiri-
" tual Chriſtian, till the Indignation ſhould paſs over the
" Earth, and that the Heavenly City ſhould then deſcend,
" and all Things afterwards be renewed, and the Curſe ta-
" ken away. *Tertullian* wrote Six Books of the Extatical
" Viſions and Revelations of the *Montaniſts*, which are
" mention'd by St. *Hierom*, and muſt have been conſidera-
" ble: Among theſe, was ſomething of the Heavenly Ma-
" riage, *which was clearly a Catholick Myſtery at the firſt.* It
" was reported alſo, that the Figure of a beautiful and
" glorious City, embling the *Jeruſalem* that is to deſcend
" from Heaven, had appear'd to them, wherein they, and
" *the other Millenaries* imagined, they ſhould live the Term
" of a Thouſand Years, in all Happineſs. Thus then, they
" were lead on with a *falſe Faith.*"

§ 3. As to the Doctrine, here above aſcribed to the *Millenaries*, Dr. *Grabe* in his *Spicel. par.* i. *p.* 31. tells us, that all the primitive Chriſtians accounted to be ſound in Faith, were ſuch; therefore we ſuppoſe the anti-prophetical Biſhops now declaring it to be a falſe Faith, were the primitive Fathers of the Generation of Scoffers, who were by the Apoſtle foretold to ariſe in the Church. For this they ſeem to take to themſelves the Honour of, by owning that the Heavenly Marriage, which by *Rev.* xix. is to take Place after the Judgment of the Whoriſh Corrupter of the Earth, was clearly a *Catholick Myſtery*, that is, ſuch an one as was univerſally acknowledg'd, *at the firſt*. But as to the ſtrict Sect of the Apoſtolicals, among whom *Montanus* continued to be, it was enough for Men of the *Apollinarian* Turn, to make him a Criminal, becauſe *he was not for ſuffering the leaſt Iota of the Goſpel* (wherein alſo this Heavenly Marriage is contained) *to fall to the Ground*; *for*, ſays the Hiſtory, *p.* 338. *his overſtraining the Letter of it, and of the reſt of the Holy Scriptures, by a too forward Zeal, was the principal Source of his Enthuſiaſtick Error.* As to religious Melancholy herein imputed to the Apoſtolicals we are told *p.* 215. that *Apollinaris did demonſtrate by his Writings, from what Sect of Philoſophy every Hereſy among the Chriſtians drew their Errors; which was of vaſt Service to the Church. For, as the* Montaniſt *Prophets in general, predicted great and terrible Things near at hand, exhorting to Repentance, and preſſing their Auditory, to make Haſt to fly from the Wrath to come*; the Catholicks therefore forbad them to ſpeak any more by that Spirit, ſeeing it was to diſturb the World, and to

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amuſe and perplex Peoples Minds, who otherwiſe might live at Eaſe, but for ſuch vain and melancholy Fancies.

§ 4. Theſe being two of the leſſer reaſons, whereon the Spirit of *Montanus* was rejected, a third perhaps might be this, conſidering that the Clergy were then choſen by the Spirit Prophetical, that "they held that none were to be "receiv'd into the Prieſthood, without an expreſs Deſig-"nation of the Holy Ghoſt: They moreover multiplied "the Number of Biſhops very much, without any appa-"rent Cauſe, and ſo rendred them far leſs conſiderable, "their Subjects being but few, and the Epiſcopal Throne "depreſſed. For not only every City, but almoſt every "little Town or Burrough, where they inhabited, had a "Biſhop. Their Presbyters continued in Subjection to "their Biſhops, as among the Catholicks; but both by the "unneceſſary Multitude of ſuch Biſhops, and by the "Claim of the one no leſs than the other, to an extraor-"dinary and Prophetical Miſſion, the Diſtinction that was "left between a Presbyter and a Biſhop, could not be in-"deed very great." I have but mention'd it, and whether there might be Emulation and Affectation of Superiority and Dominion contained in this Point, I know not. I ſhall therefore here conclude the Enumeration of all the Reaſons given us, for excommunicating the Spirit of Prophecy, in that Place and Occaſion, whereof we have largely treated; only obſerving, that the Author of *an Enquiry into the Conſtitution and Diſcipline of the primitive Church*, tells us, that the Dioceſs of a Biſhop before *Conſtantine*, meant no more than a Pariſh, and that touching Ordination, there is little ſaid in Antiquity.

§ 5. What particularly concerned *Montanus* and others with him, is not of ſo much Importance, as to examine, whether under the Colour of their Perſonal Proſecution, there was not Meaſures and Preſidents in the Church laid down, injurious to the Honour of the Spirit, and evidently tending to quench or extinguiſh Prophecy it ſelf. This therefore we have made our main Aim, and as to what was perſonal, we deſire not, that any Thing ſhould be further conſider'd of it, than as the general Glory of Chriſt, preſent with his Church, by the Prophetick Spirit, demands from our Hands. But as we have made it appear, that this Proſecution of the Inſpir'd or Prophet, was carry'd on by a Part only of the Church, we are to trace the Steps of that Proſecution further, to find whether they were more Orthodox, than thoſe whom they excommunicated:

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Becauſe that, for any thing we can find hitherto, we cannot ſee, but that if the Apoſtle *Paul*'s Declaration, that he *believ'd all Things written in the Law and the Prophets*, were a valid Plea that he was no Heretick; the ſame without any Diminution or Difference, even from the Mouths and ample Confeſſion of his Accuſers, ought to have been allowed a Plea valid alſo, in Behalf of *Montanus*. For, as to the Caſe of St. *Paul*, the *Phariſees* indeed ſaid, *If an Angel or Spirit hath ſpoken to him, let us not fight againſt God*: But the *Sadducees* being Prieſts, as well as they, who by Principle denied the Authority of an Angel, or Spirit ſpeaking, might as well condemn him for an Heretick, and had every whit as much Right to appropriate to themſelves, the Character of the Catholick Church, as theſe Condemners of *Montanus* had.

§ 6. Having then thus far limited our ſelves to ſuch a Diſcuſſion of the Point of Inſpiration among thoſe now call'd *Montaniſts*, as can be gather'd from the Memorials of that Age, wherein it was condemn'd for Diabolical by ſome Churches, and by others eſteem'd Divine. And upon all that is gather'd upon this Point, it being rational to conclude, that the Condemners of it were not regulated and warranted by the Scriptures, nor preceding Uſages of the Chriſtian Church, it does follow neceſſarily, that they were a corrupt Party among Chriſtians, who fell away and revolted from the Teſtimony of Jeſus, both written and ſurviving: Which does alſo appear from a Paſſage in Dr. *Mill*'s elaborate Preface to the New Teſtament in *Greek*, which runs thus; " This ſays he, is undoubtedly certain, " that from the very Time of its writing, there was not the " leaſt Controverſie ever moved, as far as can be gather'd " from all the Remains of Antiquity, touching the ſacred " Authority, or the Author of the *Revelation of St. John*, unto " the Year of Chriſt, 210. then *Firſt*, *Caius* a Miniſter of the " Church at *Rome*, being fired with Hatred of the *Montaniſts*, who in their Arguments upon the *Millenium*, uſed " to alledge Texts out of the *Apocalypſe*, for Proof of Earthly Pleaſures and Delights, to attend the Renovation of " the Earth and Heavens: This Man, when he ought to " have interpreted thoſe Places alledg'd in a ſpiritual Senſe; " even this *Caius* in his publick famous Diſputation, with " *Proclus*, a Leader among the *Montaniſts*, went ſo far as to " deny the ſacred Authority of that Book, and affirmed " it to be written by *Cerinthus*, (a beaſtly Heretick) under " the Name of the Apoſtle *John*."

§ 7. Had

§ 7. Had this paſſed only in Surpriſe, under the Heat of Argument, it might have admitted of a Mitigation; but *Caius* was not aſhamed to publiſh his Aſſertions, and adhere to it in Writing; and after that, the ſame Author acquaints us, that the Revelation of St. *John* fell under ſuch contempt with the *Aſiatick* Churches, that for ſeveral Hundred Years, the *Greeks* left it quite out of the Volumn of their New Teſtament, which was a Proceeding highly Criminal, if we adhere to the Text, *Rev.* xxii. 19. *If any Man ſhall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy, God ſhall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City.* But ſeeing the Matter in Fact was ſo, I leave it to the impartial Reader to judge, whether theſe Men were not Blaſphemers of the Holy Ghoſt; and whether they did not, by the Act of cutting off from the New Teſtament one of its principal Parts, give a manifeſt Proof of their Apoſtacy from Chriſt, and Contempt of the great things ſaid of Him there, by the Teſtimony of Jeſus.

§ 8. By theſe things it appears, that the Anti-prophetical Party did revolt from the Truth as it is in Jeſus, both by ridiculing the Faith of the Saints touching the full Manifeſtations of our Saviour's Glory, requir'd and teſtifyed in Scripture, which was to have been *held faſt* until the Second Coming of our Lord, *Rev.* ii. 25. and therein alſo turning into Scoff, the Hope of ſuch his Appearance, they renounced to all the Promiſes, and diſdain'd the Threatnings, which our Jeſus had ſent his Angel to ſignify to the Churches, for a ſucceſſive Memorial of him, in the Revelations vouchſafed to St. *John* the Divine. Now, as the principal Characteriſtick, whereby to judge of the Spirit of Prophecy, is the due Examination, whether it be ſuch a Teſtimony of Jeſus, as does give to Him all the Prerogatives of his rightful Sovereignity, Lordſhip, and Authority, or not; it follows then, that thoſe who owned Him indeed to have been receiv'd into Heaven, but derided *the Times of Reſtitution,* αποκαταστασεως, (explain'd by *Tertullian*, the Exhibition or open Performance) *of all things, which God hath ſpoken by the Mouth of all his Holy Prophets, ſince the World began,* *Acts* iii. 21. were no fit Judges in this Matter; being themſelves partial in acknowledging the previous Teſtimonies of God, and rejecting what of it, they did not like to retain.

§ 9. Thoſe who therefore denied Part of the written Teſtimonies, which are the very Standard by which all

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Propheſying is to be meaſured and tryed, they thereby rendred themſelves incapable of being equal Judges in the Caſe; for they who believed not, upon the Authority of all the former Prophets from the Beginning of the World, were never likely to believe their own living Ones. But let us further proceed to enquire, whether the Spirit in *Montanus* and others, was then, the true Teſtimony of Jeſus, or whether the *Apollinarians* being themſelves revolted from Truth, were Judges, therein byaſſed and corrupted by their own evil Thoughts, Imaginations and Reaſonings; for, in *Ezek.* xiv. 1--5. it is laid down as a ſtanding Rule by the Lawgiver, that whoever do ſet up *their Idols* in their Hearts, are not equal Judges of the prophetick Spirit; in which Text, the Words we render *their Idols*, are in the 70 *Greek*, διανοηματα αυτων, that is, *their own Imaginations and Thoughts:* So that the Spirit of Prophecy, ought to be tryed always, ſimply by the previous Word of God, and whoever ſets up any other Rules for the doing of it, he does therein, ſet up to himſelf ſome Idols, whereby to decide touching the only true God, jealous of his own Honour, highly concern'd in this Matter.

§ 10. We have had a Specimen of the Principles of the Anti-prophetical, exhibited by *Caius* one of their Champions, and *Praxeas* another of their chief Agents, gives us further Evidence thereof. For, ſays the Author of *Montaniſm*, " About the ſame Time there was ſent out " of *Aſia* by the Orthodox, one *Praxeas* a Perſon of *notable* " *Dexterity*, who got the Pope's Ear and obtain'd his end " of him; for, by the *Repreſentation* he gave of the Pro- " phets, he cauſed the poor Pope to retract his Declara- " tion, of approving their Prophecies for Divine; for this " *Praxeas* was at that time conſiderable in the Church, and " a *mighty Reaſoner*, tho' in ſpiritual (or revealed) Matters, " not very apt to believe, beyond what he could compre- " hend." Now the Manner of this fortunate Negotiator, and the Quality of his mighty reaſoning againſt the *Montaniſts*, appeared preſently by his publiſhing the Opinion, that God the Father deſcended into the *Virgin Mary*, and that it was he who was born of her, and ſuffered, and who was Jeſus Chriſt. The Conſequence of all which was, as followeth.

§ 11. *Tertullian* hereupon wrote his Treatiſe againſt *Praxeas*, concerning the Trinity, wherein he ſhews the Syſtem of *Praxeas*, to be contrary to the expreſs Text of Scripture, and then proceeds ſaying; " If ever Man was ſub-

borned

" borned by the Devil, the Father of Lyes, it is this *Prax-*
" *eas*, who has committed an open Inſult upon the Holy
" Ghoſt, in his Gifts extraordinary; for when the Biſhops
" of *Rome* had acknowledg'd the Propheſyings of *Montanus*,
" *Priſca*, and *Maximilla*, and by that Acknowledgment
" had given Peace unto the Churches of *Aſia* and *Prygia*;
" this *Praxeas by affirming Lyes* touching the ſaid Prophets
" and their Churches, and ſoothing up the Biſhop of *Rome*,
" with the Prerogatives of his Predeceſſors; did draw him
" to revoke the former Letters communicatory in Favour
" of the Prophets, and ceaſe from his Undertaking to eſ-
" pouſe their Prophecies. Thus did *Praxeas* at *Rome*, ne-
" gotiate two Buſineſſes for the Devil at once; that is, he
" drove our Prophecy, and brought in Hereſy; he commit-
" ted open Hoſtility upon the *Paracleet*, (the Comforter,)
" and crucify'd God the Father. After which Paſſage, *Ter-*
tullian goes on to affirm, that the *Repreſentation* given by *Praxeas* to the Church at *Rome* touching the Prophets, was falſe and could be authentically proved to be ſo. Upon this, ſays *Valeſius*, *Zephyrinus* (or the then Pope) did cauſe the Matter to be enquir'd into, and upon that Examination, granted new Letters, for reſtoring the *Montaniſts* to the Communion of the Church, not as Penitents, but as approving their Revelations.

§. 12. Dr. *Hicks* tells us on this Occaſion, " That as the
" Book of *Tertullian* written againſt *Praxeas*, is ſaid to be
" the very firſt, that was ever purpoſely written, concern-
" ing the *Trinity* in the Divine Nature; ſo is he by ſome
" thought, to have been the Inventer of the Term itſelf".
And ſeeing alſo, that it has appear'd elſewhere, that the Word *Catholick* annexed to the Church, and the inſerting into the Creed, call'd the Apoſtle's, *I believe the Holy Catholick Church*, is firſt to be found in the Writings of that Author: From a Conjunction of theſe two Points, we may conclude, that the receiving and allowance of them ſubſequent, does clearly evidence, that the Doctrine of the *Montaniſts* was Univerſal, and therefore that the Anti-propheſical who taught otherwiſe, were not granted in that Age, to be either *the Orthodox, or the Catholicks*. And if we in this Age, who judge not of any Thing, merely becauſe it was the Sentiment of the Church at any time, to be either right or wrong, farther than the Scripture itſelf does denominate it ſo, do agree with *Tertullian*, That the Doctrine of the Sacred Trinity is contained in the Scriptures, and that the ſame is eſſential to the Honour of our ador'd Lord

and Saviour. Then it follows, that the Spirit on the *Montaniſts*, was in that Point the true Teſtimony of Jeſus, and ought upon the Trial of it, to have been received, and held faſt, or adher'd to by the Church. as good, by the Canon Apoſtolick.

§ 13. But becauſe the Anti-prophetical Party then, are by Hiſtorians of latter Ages, clothed with the ſplendid Title of *the Catholick Church*, we ſhall from *The Critical Hiſtory of the Apoſtles Creed*, add here, the Original Definition of that Term, when it came firſt into that Symbol, which the Author gives thus; " The Word *Catholick*, was added in the " Creed, to prevent too rigid and ſtreightned Conceptions " of *the Church*, and the miſtaking any Part thereof for the " Whole; and to inform and ſettle the *true Believer's* Judg- " ment, in free and moderate Principles, that the One and " Holy Church, is not to be confin'd to any particular Place " or Corner; but that all thoſe who make a Profeſſion of " Jeſus Chriſt, and retain Chriſtian Love and Charity, are " the conſtituent Parts and Members, of this one holy " Church. Therefore, one Church did not imperiouſly " claim and exerciſe a Juriſdiction over another; but what- " ſoever was regularly perform'd in one Church, was al- " lowed to be valid and obligatory by all others. All which being duly conſider'd, the Uſurpation of the *Apollinarians* is the more to be heeded, in covering themſelves with the Stile of the Orthodox, and the Catholick Church, in their Excommunication of the *Montaniſts*; becauſe that therein they gave the firſt ill Preſident, that was ever known within the Chriſtian Pale, and a Handle to the Biſhop of *Rome* afterwards, for all his deteſtible Enormities, cover'd with the ſame Cloak. But to reduce all things, according to the utmoſt of my Ability, to their primitive and original Principles, and genuine Inſtitutions, I here tender a Paſſage out of Dr. *Grabe's* Preface, to the ſecond Part of his Gleanings from the antient Fathers, wherein *Chryſoſtom* treating of unjuſt Eccleſiaſtical Cenſurers, ſays thus; " would ye " know what a certain Perſon, in the very next Generation " to the Apoſtles, who alſo was crowned with the unfa- " ding Lawrel of Martyrdom, determines in this Matter, " who when he would ſet forth, how enormous a Crime " the ſame was, he illuſtrates it with this Similitude? If " a Scoundrel, ſays he, among the Rabble, ſhould aſſume " to himſelf the imperial Purple, both he and his Accom- " plices in the Fact, were juſtly to ſuffer the moſt ignomi- " nious Death, as tyrannical Uſurpers; ſo likewiſe, who-

" ever

" ever do invade the Prerogative of the Lord, by unlaw-
" ful Uſurpation, and thereby pronounce a Man, convict-
" ed and condemn'd by the *Church*; they precipitate them-
" ſelves into utter Diſtruction, by aſſuming to themſelves
" the peculiar Regality of the Son, whom God, has conſti-
" tuted Judge."

§ 14. But without inſiſting further here, on the Orthodoxy of the Accuſed or Accuſers, becauſe by the univerſal Judgment of the Church at this Day, I know the *Montaniſts* or Inſpir'd, will be acquitted, and of courſe ought by us Proteſtants no longer to be reputed Hereticks; ſince they were not only in this of the Trinity, but in all other Points doctrinal, ſound in the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints; and only reproachable, that they pretended to be Reformers of what was amiſs, in the Declenſion of others from it. Therefore, we go on to give an Inſtance of that uſurping and tyrannical Temper, which roſe up and prevail'd among the Anti-prophetical, to effect at length a total Deſolation of the Chriſtian Church; the Caſe whereof is reported by the Hiſtory of *Montaniſm* thus; " After
" the Death of *Tertullian*, in or about the Year 231. the
" *Montaniſts* did not preſently loſe their Ground; for, *Fir-*
" *milian* a Biſhop in *Aſia* finding their Sect to ſpread, and
" that they profeſſed themſelves to have the ſame Faith
" and Baptiſm as other Chriſtians, and only to differ from
" them in *greater Spirituality and Purity*; gather'd a Coun-
" cil of fifty Biſhops at *Iconium*, who determined their
" Baptiſm to be invalid and null. Unto which time all
" Communion did not ſeem intirely cut off, becauſe the
" Validity of the *Montaniſt* Baptiſm, was hitherto allowed;
" but thus all Correſpondence between them and other
" Chriſtians, was intirely broken off.

§ 15. The new riſing Catholicks, it ſeems, did judge that Spirituality and Purity, were things worthy to be expelled their Church; but it was not ſo with other Churches at that time; for this Reaſon being eſteem'd inſufficient, we find them witneſſing againſt the Uſurpation above cited. For the critical Hiſtory of the Apoſtles Creed tells us, " that altho', whatſoever was regularly performed in one
" Church, was allowed to be valid and obligatory by all
" others; yet for a Man to offer to prove this Concentani-
" ouſneſs among the Churches, touching Baptiſm, would
" be the greateſt Impertinency, ſeeing every one knows,
" that *the Baptiſm of Hereticks was deem'd valid, and was*
" *never reiterated.* Here then was ſuch a Sentence paſſed

againſt the Prophets and their Adherents, as was never known againſt the groſſeſt of Hereſies, tho' they are taxed with no other kind of Hereſy, than that of a greater Spirituality and Purity; why therefore, ſays the Author of *Montaniſm*, " the Baptiſm of *Montaniſts* ſhould be held leſs va-
" lid than that of the other Hereticks, and Hereticks too,
" that made the fierceſt Oppoſition againſt the Capital Do-
" ctrines of the Chriſtian Faith, which theſe did not; for,
" *Firmilian* himſelf own'd, that they profeſſed the ſame
" Faith with other Chriſtians; why therefore the others
" were admitted by Penance only, but theſe not without
" another Baptiſm, has not been yet unfolded, ſo far as
" I know, by any: Moreover it is plain, that *ſome of the*
" *Orthodox*, did in the time of St. *Firmilian* himſelf doubt,
" whether their Baptiſm was invalid, or no."

§ 16. After what has been cited of the Notoriety of the Fact, that the Baptiſm of Hereticks was always deem'd valid and never reiterated, and that the Concentaniouſneſs among the Churches in this Point, was ſo known to every one, that it would be as impertinent to go about to give Proof of it, as that there is a SUN in the Heavens: We are allowed to underſtand, that *the ſome of the Orthodox* abovemention'd, were no other than ſome of the perſecuting Clergy in *Aſia* themſelves, who being reſolved by Hook or by Crook, to extirpate Prophecy in their Parts, at any Rate, made no Bones of breaking down the moſt eſtabliſh'd Uſages of all the Churches. And to ſhew that this very Act of *Firmilian*, was ſo taken, the Teſtimony of *Dyonyſius* Biſhop of *Alexandria*, quoted by *Euſebius*, lib. vii. cap. 4 and 6. may ſuffice ſaying; " *Stephen* Biſhop of *Rome*
" wrote an Epiſtle touching *Firmilian*, and all *Cilicia*, *Cap-*
" *padocia*, *Galatia*, and the bordering Nations, that he
" would not communicate with them, for this Cauſe, *to*
" *wit.* that they re-baptis'd Hereticks; and as to my
" Predeceſſor *Heracleas*, ſays *Dyonyſius*, he never would
" admit, that Hereticks ſhould be re-baptis'd; and I am
" ſure of this, that not only the Biſhops of *Africa* have
" practis'd the like, but alſo the Biſhops of old in the moſt
" famous Churches, and the *Synods* more lately of the Bre-
" thren at *Iconium* and *Synadis*, with the Advice of many,
" have decreed the ſame: Whoſe Sentences to overthrow,
" and now to raiſe Contention and Brawling among the
" Brethren, I cannot bear with.

§ 17. By the State of the Caſe above, it ſeems the Council under *Firmilian*, had determined, that Hereticks in general

general ought to be re-baptis'd, becauſe the Baptiſm of ſuch was null; for in the counter Declarations of the Churches in *Europe* and *Africa*, there is no particular Mention of the *Montaniſts*, altho' *Firmilian* and his Party might apply it chiefly, or only unto them; but we ſee by this Manner of proceeding, that the *Apollinarian* Sect, or Hereſy, was the Inverter of the Antient Order and Harmony in the Churches of Chriſt, and was the Reverſe to the true, holy, Catholick Church, which is eſſentially Characterized to have been before this, One in Love and Charity, as well as one in Faith and Doctrine. But it being apparent, from this and former Inſtances, that the Anti-prophetical Sect led the Van, to human Uſurpations in the Church, we ſhall find another diſmal Corruption, wherein they were alſo the chief Leaders.

§ 18. *Irenæus* takes Notice of ſome Men, who objected to the extraordinary Miniſtrations of the Prophet in his time, that they were performed after a phantaſtical or ridiculous Manner, which ſays he, is however defenſible from Preſidents among the antient Prophets: Whether or no, he had any Reſpect to the *Apollinarians* therein, is not material; but as to the Fact of ridiculing the Ways of the Spirit of Prophecy, the Hiſtory of *Montaniſm* in the cloſe of the Second Century, does repreſent the Anti-prophetical, upbraiding the *Montaniſts* with melancholy and vain Fancies, with Viſions or waking Dreams, pretending to have ſuch, tho' none ſaw them but themſelves, and objecting even to the outward Symptoms of a Spirit, moving the Prophets. This Diſpoſition then, among the firſt Excommunicators of the Spirit, being equally applicable to the true as well as falſe Prophets, ſowed the firſt Seeds that we know of, in the Chriſtian Church, of Profaneſs and Contempt of God revealing. And as *Apollinaris* himſelf is celebrated, for ſo mighty Skill in Philoſophy, that he demonſtrated in his Writings, from what Principles of Philoſophy, every Hereſy among Chriſtians did ſpring; we cannot doubt but his Admirers, did purſue his Methods ſo laid down, for the diſcovering of all Hereſy, as appears by *Praxeas* a mighty Reaſoner, his being ſo conſiderable in the Church; wherein they were further edifyed alſo, by the publick Inſtitution of Schools about the Year 230. for poliſhing the Study of Divine Things, by the intermixing them with human Phyloſophy, *viz.* the Syſtems of the Wiſe and critically Learned among the Heathen.

§ 19. Now, as to the Effect of this Study of Philoſophy,

and the Sort of reaſoning uſed among the Catholicks, on the Subject of Revelation, in the Age immediately ſucceeding *Firmilian*, we may gather ſome Light into it, from a fore-cited Paſſage of Mr. *Dodwell*, which runs thus; "I "confeſs indeed, ſays he, that there were in the Days of "St. *Cyprian*, Perſons in the Chriſtian Church, who treated Viſions and Dreams in Ridicule; a Sort of Men, who "in the Time of the Scripture-Prophets, that they might "bring all Religion into Contempt, did attempt to do that "with Scurrility and the Snear, with Banter and the Joke, "which they never could do in any way of Argument. "The Manner of the Prophets in their Geſtures of Body, "was indeed a little ſtrange, and different from the common Uſages of Men, which it was eaſy for thoſe who "were given to Buffoonry, to repreſent the Prophets themſelves, as very ridiculous by. Wherefore, if Men would "ſuffer themſelves eaſily to tranſgreſs, they never needed "to look far for a Pretext, when they would judge theſe, "or ſuch like Things, ſufficient Reaſons to treat the Perſons of the Prophets with Scorn. And that ſuch like Perſons ſhould be found in the Church, in the Days of "St. *Cyprian*, is little to be wondred at, ſeeing that *the* "Epicurean *Philoſophy had then obtained the Vogue, which* "*turns all preternatural Things into Ridicule. It was no Mat-* "*ter with this Sort of People, whether the Propheſyings were* "*from a true Spirit, or a falſe one*; or whether thoſe who "more perfectly underſtood ſuch Things, did approve them "or not: This is what never came into Queſtion; but the "very Mention of the Supernatural, with the Gentlemen of "an *Epicurean* Tincture, was Matter enough to ſerve them "for a Joke. Now as to the Atheiſtical *Epicurean* Chriſtians, and People of that Turn, it always was, and is "at this Day, their genuine Faculty, to ſit down content "with, and ſettle upon the Lees of ſome general Syſtems, "or projected Suppoſitions of their own; and not to trouble their Heads about any particular Inſtances ſet before "them; no not ſo much, as to enquire (any ways diſtinctly) into them.

§ 20. This of the two preceding Sections, being an Account of the primitive Fathers in the Church, of the numerous Brood of Philoſophizing Chriſtians, and of *Free-Thinkers*, as the Moderns call them, it is paſt the Power of any Contradiction, that every Man tinctured with ſuch Principles, was of the Catholick Party. And as *Apollinaris* and *Praxeas* had rendred themſelves celebrated in this

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Way of Science; ſo, as ſoon as ever the *Epicurean* Philoſophy (which turns all things Supernatural into Ridicule) had obtained to be in Vogue, the Anti-prophetical did clearly gain their Point by it, and ſoon hiſſed the *Montaniſts* quite off the Stage. Wherefore, when the Chriſtian Church was come to be of this Complexion, we ſhall not only ceaſe to be aſtoniſhed, that whole Societies of Men unreproachable for Doctrine and Life, were expelled out of the Church, and denied the very Chriſtian Name, meerly on the Account of their greater Spirituality and Purity; but from ſuch a Juncture, even from the Days of St. *Cyprian*, (who died about *Anno* 260.) there ceaſed to be room for any Arguments, in Behalf of Inſpiration, or Prophecy exiſtent, becauſe the very Mention of the ſupernatural, did but ſerve and furniſh Matter for a Jeſt; ſeeing it was all one, with this Sort of People, *whether the Propheſyings were from a true Spirit, or a falſe one.* But that the Church in general was of that Complexion from vain Philoſophy of one Kind or other, as to make a Scoff at ſupernatural Things, about the Time of St. *Cyprian*, may be gather'd partly from the Silence of the Age ſucceeding him, touching the Gifts of the Spirit, and is intimated plainly, from the Words of Mr. *Dodwell*, in the Cloſe of the Second Part of this Treatiſe; for, when he ſays, that *the moſt Learned, the more perfectly inſtructed, and the moſt intelligent Perſons in Spiritual Affairs*, who were Contemporaries with St. *Cyprian*, did acknowledge the Prophetical Gifts then in the Church; he intimates that the Deſpiſers of them, upon *Epicurean*, or other Philoſophick Principles, were the Body and more numerous of the Church.

§ 21. The Advance of Philoſophy being as above, the Introduction to Infidelity in the extraordinary Communications of the Spirit, which were by the Scripture-Conſtitution, not to be judged of, by *Science falſly ſo call'd*; we have already ſeen the ſad Effects of that preſumptuous reaſoning, in the Caſe of *Praxeas*, touching our Saviour's Deity; from which Time, the Contempt of it, went on encreaſing, unto the Days of *Arrius*. It is not for me, to enter into the Merits of that Debate; but this is certain, that the Spirit of Prophecy, the living Teſtimony of Jeſus among the *Montaniſts*, did as all the Prophets in the Chriſtian Church had ever done, that is, aſcribe to the Son of God the Prerogatives of the Deity. They were the moſt remarkable of all Chriſtians in the Acknowledgment of this Point, and the moſt expreſs concerning it, and the Oppoſers of that

Doctrine were on that Account, the moſt fierce Perſecutors of them. This alſo is obſervable, that *the Catholicks*, who were *the Accuſers chiefly* of the *Montaniſt*, joined rather with the *Arrian*, in all Meaſures to ſuppreſs the Prophet, than with the ſtrongeſt Advocate of Chriſt's Deity, to withſtand the Blaſphemers of it. Nor is it to be wonder'd at; for if *Praxeas* and the *Arrians* were ſo devoted to ſtrong reaſoning, and conceited that theirs was ſuch, with reſpect to the Divinity of Chriſt the Redeemer, that they would not bow down their Necks, to admit any thing upon the Credit of Revelation on that Point, which they could not comprehend; the *Catholicks*, tho' they might not univerſally apply it to that Point, yet ſeem to have gone upon the ſame Principle, that if they themſelves alſo could not by their Rules of Philoſophy, comprehend God, in the Ways and Act of his then revealing, neither would they believe at all, that it was He. Thus therefore, the Learned generally becoming blind to the Ways of the Spirit, the Viſion of all the Prophets ſet before them, were no other to them than as unintelligible, *as the Words of a Letter ſealed*, Iſa, xxix. whilſt it is apparent that ſome of the moſt intelligent in ſpiritual Affairs, did own Prophetical Gifts exiſting in the Church, after the Days of *Cyprian*.

§ 22. We have obſerved from the *Hiſtory of Montaniſm*, that it was imputed to the Prophets, that they would not ſuffer *the leaſt Iota of the written Word of God*, to fall to the Ground, and that it was one principal Occaſion of their Deluſion, that they adhered too ſtifly to *the Letter of the Text*. But as it may ſeem ſtrange and unintelligible to us of the Reformed Communion, how ſuch a Matter could be charged upon them for a Guilt, we remit the Reader to Dr. *Mill*'s admirable Preface to the *Greek* New Teſtament, where he affirms in twenty Places of it, as may be ſeen by the *Index*, that to impute the Adulteration of Scripture to the Hereticks, for the vindicating their Opinions and Doctrines, is a meer Fable, *Marcion* only excepted, and his Followers. Now it cannot be gainſaid, that the *Montaniſts* were ſtiff Oppoſers of *Marcion* and his Followers, inſomuch that *Tertullian* wrote more ſtrenuouſly againſt him, than any of the *Catholicks*, and did upbraid him boldly, for that daring Impiety of altering the written Words of God. Moreover, as Dr. *Mills* not only expreſly clears the *Montaniſts*, but peremptorily charges the Orthodox or Catholick Chriſtians, and them alone with this horrid Crime; and ſays, that among theſe, the *Learned* were

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the guilty Authors of that Calamity on the Text. This also must be reckoned among the dismal Effects, which vain Philosophy introduced upon the Christian World.

§ 23. In this Manner the greater Part of Christians, having before the Time of *Constantine*, in pursuance of the President first given by the *Apollinarian* Churches, exalted *Reason* into the Throne in Opposition to the Spirit of Prophecy, and condemn'd the latter by the Rules and Dictates of the former; and then, as if the Golden Image of *Apollo* had Right to be worshipp'd, when their *Reason* had utter'd its Oracles, they went on to persecute those, who could not bow down to it. For, as the Sentences of Excommunication against the Prophets, unwarrantable by Scripture and Customs of the Church, that were pertinaciously carried on in *Asia*, had loudly proclaimed this Temper of Usurpation; so, when the Secular Authority came by the Conversion of *Constantine* into the Church, *Eusebius* tells us, "the "Emperor being minded to suppress certain Hypocrites, "who like Caterpillars and Locusts, under a counterfeit "Shew of Religion, devour'd Cities, did by an Edict "command the Governors of Provinces, to suppress such "kind of Men; the Letters Pattent whereof, among other "Things, ran to this Effect,

§ 24. *KNOW YE, by this Law which I have established,* "*O* Cataphrygians, (the Nickname given to the Prophetical) *and all of ye, who desire your Sects and Heresies, that ye* "*have followed and maintained, should encrease and spread:* "*KNOW YE, I say, that your Doctrine is both vain and* "*false, O ye Enemies of Truth, and Eternal Life, ye Authors* "*and Counsellors of Death, whose Tenets and Opinions are con-* "*trary to Truth, consonant to Wickedness, and full of Vanity* "*and fabulous Fictions, whereby ye do spread abroad Lies, and* "*poison others with your Contagion, and strive almost to take* "*away the Day-Light from Man. Why should I insist with ye* "*on Particulars, seeing Brevity of Time and my own Affairs* "*do not permit me, to describe your Wickedness in such Colours* "*as it deserves; for your Wickedness is so great and abounding,* "*that it requires a large Description of such Actions, and the* "*very Mention of them would but be a Disgrace to the Christi-* "*an Religion? Why should not we rather, with all Dispatch,* "*root out such Wickedness, by publick Punishments on the Of-* "*fenders? Now, that your pestilential and infectious Errors* "*may spread no further, We command you by this Law, that* "*none of you dare hereafter to meet at Conventicles; and there-* "*fore we command, that all those Places where ye were wont to*

"*keep*

" *keep ſuch Meetings, ſhall be demoliſhed. And we command* " *ye from this Day, to keep no more factious and ſuperſtitious* " *Meetings, neither in publick Places, nor in private Houſes,* " *but to return to the* Catholick Church." Touching which Edict, the ſaid Hiſtorian adds, " That it enjoined that the " *Montaniſt* Books ſhould be ſearched after, and ſuppreſs'd, " That the publick Meeting-houſes alſo ſhould be without " any Delay, pulled down, and confiſcated to the Catho- " lick Church, but that more private Places of their aſ- " ſembling together, ſhould be converted to the Uſe of " the Commonwealth. The Iſſue of which Law was, ſays " *Euſebius* (in the Third Book of the Life of *Conſtantine*) *that* " *the Catholick Church of God alone, being well compacted within* " *it ſelf, ſhone forth brightly, there being not one Society either* " *of Hereticks or Schiſmaticks, left any where ſubſiſting in the* " *World.*"

§ 25. If this Edict had been iſſued, as the Reſult of all the ſeveral Churches reſpectively conſulted, the ſame ought to have been regarded as the Declaration of the Catholick or univerſal Church, but the Edict takes no Notice of any ſuch Thing precedent. On the contrary, the Hiſtorian obſerves, that the very Union of the Catholick Church, was by this Imperial Decree, framed and compacted within it ſelf, and this Union was but the Iſſue and Effect of that Politi- cal Inſtitution. Now, the peculiar Happineſs of the Times before *Conſtantine* was, that nothing could properly take the Denomination of Hereſy, that is, a Doctrine by the Church adjudged erroneous, but what all the Churches, acting ſeverally on their own bottom, concurred in the de- nouncing to be ſuch; and ſo, the Manner admitting more Deliberation, and there being a perfect Liberty in every of the Churches to enter a Negative Proteſtation, the Per- ſpicuity of the Caſe carrying its own Eviction, was alone ſufficient to obtain: And thus the Sentence of the Uni- verſal Church, was more ſolemn and authentick before *Conſtantine*, than by general Councils afterwards; for in theſe latter, the major Vote of a Multitude aſſembled in one Place, was concluſive to all *Chriſtendom*. Nevertheleſs, the Determination of the Church viſible, never could at any Time, or can ſtand in Competition with the Authority of the Word of God, which has alone the Prerogative both of the poſitive and negative, that is, what is, or is not, *He- reſy*; for, ſays the *Critical Hiſtory of the Apoſtle's Creed*, " The primitive Writers lay a great Streſs upon the Di- " ſtinction, between *believing*, and *believing* IN; ſo that we

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" are not only ſimply to believe the Father and the Son, " but IN the Father, and IN the Son, terminating our " Faith upon them, Whereas, it is not ſaid, IN the Ho- " ly Church, but barely that we believe the Holy Church; " and the Framers of the Symbol, did omit to prefix the " Preposition *IN*, to the Article of believing the Holy " Church, that the Creator might be diſtinguiſhed from the " Creatures, and Divine Things ſeparated from human."

§ 26. As to the Caſe in hand, touching the *Montaniſts*, the laſt Sentence againſt them, being to nullifie and void their Baptiſm, there was a Council Eccleſiaſtical in *Africa*, which during the Reign of *Conſtantine*, did at *Carthage* conclude againſt it; and in the general, there was not even unto this Time, in that Part of the World, any Condemnation paſſed againſt the Prophets, by a publick and ſolemn Act there. Moreover, as *Phrygia* had been from the Beginning, even from the Year, 170. the chief Seat of this Controverſy, and the main Occaſion of Debates, all over the Chriſtian World about it; *Phrygia* it ſelf at laſt can teſtify, that the many Councils which excommunicated the Inſpir'd, were not the genuine Acts of the Church there. For, the Hiſtory of *Montaniſm* tells us, " That when *Con-* " *ſtantine the Great*, had made certain Laws againſt Here- " ticks, and the *Montaniſts* were involved with them, in " *other Provinces*; they eſcaped, as *Sozomen* takes Notice, in " *that of Phrygia*, and the Parts adjacent, without any Mo- " leſtation; the which was not probable, on the Account " of their Numbers only, bnt that they were there reckon- " ed, for the *eſtabliſhed Church*, otherwiſe the Laws of " *Conſtantine* muſt needs have reached them."

§ 27. Theſe Laws of *Conſtantine* therefore, tho' they laid the Scheme of conſolidating the Catholick Church, and well compacting it within it ſelf, upon the Foot of the Imperial Government and Authority, and ſuppreſſing the antient Conſtitution; yet by what appears, they did not immediately effect it, even with reſpect to the *Montaniſts*. And as to other Points, we have great Difficulty to underſtand the Words of *Euſebius*, how *the Catholick Church ſhone forth brightly, being well compacted within it ſelf, and that there was not one Society of Hereticks, left ſubſiſting any where in the World*. For, that Hiſtorian himſelf gives us a large Account of the Hurly-burly, Broils and Confuſions of Churches, and open ſcandalous Conteſtations of the Clergy, one Biſhop againſt another, and one City and Province againſt another, at this very Juncture far and wide raging, between

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the *Orthodox* and *Arrians*; ſo that the Rent made in the Church, was never precedently greater. There is no Way therefore to underſtand this new Brightneſs, ſtampt upon the Church, by the foreſaid Edict of the Emperor's, than by granting the Doctrine of *Arrius*, to be no Hereſy, and allowing the Diſſentions about it, no Violation of her well compacted Union. Which Things being very hard to reconcile, I ſhall remark no more about them, than that the Catholicks who ruled at Court, perſwaded the Emperor, that the *Arrians* ought not to be eſteem'd for Hereticks, and therefore they were not mention'd in the Edict ſo applauded.

§ 28. By the Book ſeveral times mention'd, call'd *An Enquiry into the Conſtitution of the primitive Church*, it appears that before *Conſtantine*, the greateſt City in *Chriſtendom* except *Alexandria*, had but one Meeting or Congregation of Chriſtians in it; ſo that doubtleſs after him, the Number of thoſe bearing the Name was exceedingly encreaſed. But if the Catholick Church of Chriſt, were to be meaſured by his magnificent Gifts to her, or by the Soundneſs of her Faith and Doctrine, or by the refulgence of her Love and Charity, or by the Lives of her Houſhold, we might ſay a great deal to render it very queſtionable, whether ſhe gain'd any Brightneſs at all, from the Laws or Reign of *Conſtantine*. But this we may ſay, if it be any Advantage to her, that by, and under the Shadow of the *Roman* Empire's Authority, ſhe gained a greater Facility, of declaring whom ſhe pleaſed for Hereticks, and then oppreſſing them with temporal Inflictions. However, as our Subject ſtands limited to the Caſe of prophetical Inſpiration, and conſidering that the Degree of *Conſtantine* againſt the *Montaniſts*, was rather an Act of State than any Determination properly of the Catholick Church under him; we ſhall now take one ſingle Step further, and ſee what the Catholick Church, thus compacted within it ſelf, by the Inſtitution political of *Conſtantine*, did tranſact and determine, in two of her firſt general Councils, againſt the Inſpir'd called *Montaniſts*, and their Churches; for it appears, that not only in the large Province of upper and lower *Phrygia*, but in the Parts adjacent, they were unmoleſted by the Laws of *Conſtantine*.

§ 29. The Author of *Montaniſm* ſays, "That *Firmilian* "himſelf, under whom the Sentence paſſed, for declar- "ing the Baptiſm of *Montaniſts* to be null and void, de- "clares that they profeſſed the *ſame Faith and Baptiſm* as "the

" the *Catholicks*; and hereon, he cites the Opinion of *Ba-*
" *ronius*, that there are convincing Proofs in *Tertullian.*
" that the *Montaniſts* were generally *Orthodox*, in the Faith
" of the Trinity, *and Canonical* in the Form of baptizing:
Touching which Sentence, we have proved already moſt fully, that by univerſal Conſcentaniouſneſs of the Churches preceding *Firmilian*, and by expreſs Declarations of the moſt Famous Churches of *Chriſtendom*, ſubſequent to that Sentence; the *Catholicks* in *Aſia* had uſurped an Authority, which never was before *Conſtantine* exerciſed in the Church. But now we ſhall preſent the Reader with a View of the Manner of the Church, after it was new embodyed and conſolidated, by imperial Charter. The Inſtance whereof, is drawn from the Hiſtory of *Montaniſm*, abruptly as he gives it.

§ 30. " It ſeems ſtrange and unaccountable, that the
" Baptiſm of thoſe, who had been ſynodically condemn'd,
" either as Blaſphemers againſt the Son of God with the
" *Arrians*, or againſt the Holy Ghoſt with the *Macedoni-*
" *ans*, ſhould be allowed as valid, and yet the Baptiſm of
" the *Montaniſts* ſhould be declared null and utterly void;
" but ſo it was. What therefore ſhould be this, that could
" prevail with ſo great and venerable a Body, as the Se-
" cond General Council (when they had but juſt confirm-
" ed the Faith of the *Nicene* Fathers, concerning the Con-
" ſubſtantiality of the Father and the Son, againſt the *Ar-*
" *rians*; and had alſo in like manner, ſo ſolemnly declared
" the Catholick Faith concerning the Holy Ghoſt, by that
" Creed which we at this Day uſe) to admit both *Ar-*
" *rians* and *Macedonians*, into Communion without re-bap-
" tizing, and at the very ſame Tme, to reject the *Monta-*
" *niſts* from the like Benefit? What alſo ſhould be this, that
" could ſo prevail with the Council of *Laodicea*, conſiſt-
" ing moſtly of *Phrygian* Biſhops, held in a Place, where
" they were every where ſurrounded with *Montaniſts*, and
" where conſequently they could not but be rightly inform-
" ed of their Principles and Cuſtoms, *if they pleaſed?* I ſay
" again, what ſhould be this, that could prevail with two
" ſuch Aſſemblies, filled with Judges, that were every Way
" undoubtedly qualified, to proceed after this Manner;
" is at firſt, a moſt amazing Conſideration, and *may well*
" *deſerve to be further look'd into?* For, why the *Arrians* and
" *Macedonians*, were admitted into the Communion of
" the Church Catholick, by Penance only; but the *Monta-*
" *niſts* not without another Baptiſm, has not been yet un-
" ſolded,

" folded, ſo far as I know, by any." (Here the Author examines many Reaſons, reported and ſuggeſted for this Proceeding, but finds them all and every one, like the Witneſſes teſtifying againſt our Saviour, groſly falſe, diſagreeing and inconſiſtent, and then adds his own Sentiment, thus,) " Wherefore, it remains, that the *only true and adequate Ground* of this Difference, which was made both " by the *Conſtantinopolitan* and the *Laodicean* Fathers, between the *Arrians* and *Macedonians* on the one Hand, " and the *Montaniſts* on the other, was this; that the *Arrians* and *Macedonians* tho' Hereticks, did never once " pretend, to act and ſpeak by a Spirit and Power above " themſelves. But on the contrary, all knew the Pretenſions of the *Montaniſts*, and that the Foundation of their " Extravagances (*not Hereſies*) was this Pretext of a Divine " Spirit and Power, *extraordinarily and even viſibly acting them.*

§ 31. Had the *Montaniſts* been taxable of real Hereſy, ſuch as the denying the Deity of Chriſt, and of the Holy Ghoſt, by the Canon of Scripture, is whoever at this diſtance of Time, ſhould induſtriouſly write in their Defence, would deſerve after two or three Admonitions, to be rejected from the Communion of all Chriſtians, by the Apoſtolick Rule. But at the ſame time, that their very Accuſers acquit them of any real Hereſy, that is, ſuch Error doctrinal as in Points material is oppoſed to the Divine Oracle; for a general Council, by the Meaſure of its Cenſures, to declare them greater Criminals than the Blaſphemers of Chriſt and of the Holy Ghoſt, meerly and only becauſe they believed a Spirit and Power, extraordinarily, and even viſibly acting them, to be Divine; this is in the moſt enormous Manner poſſible, for the Catholick Church viſible, embodied under its new Conſtitution, to declare her ſelf revolting and apoſtatized from her due Allegiance to Chriſt, whoſe Preſence with her the Spirit of Prophecy was: Seeing that in the firſt and Second Parts of this Treatiſe, and alſo herein, we have abundantly proved from the ſacred Text, and the primo-primitive Church of Chriſt, that every true Prophet ſent of God, ever did and ever muſt ſpeak, by a Spirit and Power above themſelves; and that its extraordinary and even viſible *acting them*, was the moſt conſtant Sign of their Inſpiration, alledg'd in the Holy Text.

§ 32. To be partial in our ſelves, and to judge any thing by a Partiality of Eſteem and Affection, is the ſureſt

Way

Way to go aſtray from the Truth, as it is in Jeſus, and more eſpecially in that particular, of his Teſtimonial Spirit of Prophecy. If then, touching the Prophet himſelf, we are to appeal to, and be determined by the Law and Teſtimonies preceding, the Standard of the ſure Word of Prophecy, and reject an Angel of Light, if it were poſſible for ſuch an one to preach contrary to them; I can ſee no Reaſon, why we ſhould otherwiſe treat Satan transforming himſelf, in any other Manner; nay, tho he ſhould be ſeated in a Throne, and veſt himſelf with the venerable Name of the *Catholick Church*; for we cannot underſtand how the Number of Abetters can ſtamp what is Error, by the Word of the Lord, with the Signature and characterizing Mark of Truth. Therefore, whilſt we are bound to believe the Catholick Church, we are no further obliged to it by the Creed, than as ſhe is ONE, and HOLY, or united in Holineſs, that is, in Principles which take the Denomination of their Sanctity, from a ſcriptural Definition. And in Conſequence, when ever the Church viſible departs from that Character of Holy, ſhe may be even literally Heretical, as well as any ſmaller Party of Chriſtians whom ſhe excommunicates; as we have heard already that the Framers of the Apoſtolical Symbol, did omit to prefix the Prepoſition *IN*, to the Article of believing the Catholick Church, that the Creator might be diſtinguiſhed from the Creatures, and Divine Things ſeparated from Human. And leaſt any one ſhould think, that the Article of the Creed immediately following, whereby we profeſs to believe *the Communion of Saints*, did in this Age oblige Men to conform to the Concluſions of the general Council, the Repreſentative of the Catholick Church viſible; the forecited Critical Annotator on that Creed, tells us; "that "the ſaid Article touching the Communion of Saints, is "not to be found in any Creed before St. *Auſtin*'s Time, "nor in any of his genuin and undoubted Writings, tho' "it be very likely, that about that Time, or not long after, "this Clauſe was introduced into it," (that is about *Anno Chriſti*, 450.)

§ 33. What then, tho' the *Montaniſts* or Prophetical, were become but a ſmall Party, in Compariſon of their Opponents, when theſe by a General Council held at *Laodicea*, in or about *Anno Chriſti*, 368. deprived them of the Chriſtian Name and Communion? The Queſtion returns ſtill to the ſame Point; Was this Act of the Catholick Church viſible, according to the Law and Teſtimonies divine,

vine, or not? Now, we have proved both from Scripture and preceding Antiquity, that to reject and condemn a Prophet, meerly and only because he was visibly moved, and pretended to speak by a Power and Spirit above himself, is anti-scriptural, and therefore anti-christian. And in this very Case of their Baptism condemn'd but a Hundred Years before, even upon the like Excommunication under *Firmilian*, the most famous Churches expresly, and the Church universally did declare the same to have been so unjustifiable, that they even refused to communicate, on that Account, with the censuring *Asiatick* Churches themselves. But the *History of Montanism* tells us, that tho' this above-mention'd was the only "true Ground, wheron the Councils of *Constantinople* and "*Laodicea* proceeded so unequally with the *Montanists*; "yet there are many other Reasons reported, and among "the rest, that they were *Sabellians*; but says he, this "could not be true, for the *Sabellians* did subscribe to the "Degrees of the same Councils; nay and did appeal to "them, even so far, that the *Arrians* charged those Councils or one of them, to have been in their Decrees, Patrons of *Sabellianism*.

§ 34. It is indeed a Matter worthy of Lamentation, that the Degrees of the Catholick Church, should be unaccountable for, without manifest Misrepresentation of Fact, or such doctrinal Rules touching Prophecy as are evidently opposed to Scripture. But seeing we have now trac'd the Prosecution of condemning the Prophets, for two Hundred Years, from the first Sentence under *Apollinaris* unto this Council of *Laodicea*, and have found little else in it, than what proceeded, from one or other of those two Sources, and was built upon such Grounds; we shall now agree, that the whole Matter, as well as this Determination at *Laodicea*, well deserves to be further look'd into; but this latter indeed more especially, since every true Prophet of God, ever did and ever will, speak as moved to it, by a Power and Spirit above his own: And if the Determination of these primitive general Councils, be allowed to set aside and invalidate, a Thousand Places in the sacred Text, which oblige us to acknowledge a Messenger of the Heavenly King, there is no need to enquire further how the Gift of Prophecy, came finally to cease in the Christian Church; because that so far as these Councils were owned and submitted to every Instrument over-ruled by the Hand of the Lord to Prophecy, must by these Laws be driven out of the Church, and denied the Christian Name for so doing;

doing; at leaſt, thus it appears to me, becauſe there's no Diſtinction made in them, between the being moved and ſpeaking by a good Spirit, from that of an evil One; but herein, I ſhould gladly be undeceiv'd, if the whole State of the Controverſy, and eſpecially this particular, can be made to bear a truer Judgment of Things, by the Divine Law.

§ 35. As the Council of *Laodicea* is ſaid to be every where ſurrounded with *Montaniſts*, it is not probable, that they ſhould in thoſe Countries ſubmit, to a Decree of it, againſt themſelves, which is in it ſelf ſo extravagant, and utterly unaccountable for; moreover the Hiſtorian of *Montaniſm* does confeſs, that notwithſtanding this Determination of two general Councils, the Church of *Alexandria* did admit them into Communion, without re-baptizing, after the Year 400; and St. *Auſtin* ſays, that in his time, *viz.* about the Year 430. the Hereticks in *Africa* did pretend to enjoy the prophetical Gifts of the Spirit. Wherefore, as in the Second Part of this Treatiſe, we deſiſted from an Enquiry, after the Survival of acknowledged Prophecy, with the Beginning of the Fifth Century, ſo we ſhall alſo finiſh theſe Animadverſions, on that which was controverted, with the ſame Age. We ſubmit therefore, all that has been ſaid, to a more ſtrict Examination, ſuppoſing, that if we could come to a clear Certainty, of the time when the laſt of Chriſtian Churches ſound in the Faith, did acknowledge ſuch Prophecy, as was according to the Analogy of Scripture; it would be as appoſite a Period, from whence to date the Apoſtacy of the Church, as any other in the Fifth Century, which many learned Tracts have fixed upon; in Order thence to calculate, from the Numbers of *Daniel*, and the *Revelations*, the Brightneſs of our Lord's Coming, to deſtroy the Anti-chriſtian State, with the Spirit of his Mouth, 2 *Theſ.* ii. 8.

§ 36. So far as Men are equitable in their Judgments, they cannot but allow, that the Prieſts of the antient Church of God among the *Jews*, were Teachers eſtabliſhed therein, by as clear Definitions at leaſt, and inveſted with Prerogatives by Divine Authority as ample at leaſt, as the ſtated Miniſtry of the uninſpired Biſhop, Paſtor, or Teacher, in the Chriſtian Church. Yet by the Conſtitution of the Divine Æconomy among the *Jews*, there was reſerved to himſelf the Lawgiver, a Liberty of ſending to them, extraordinary Miniſters, as often and in what Number, he alone ſhould think fit; to exhort, rebuke, guide, teach and ex-

pound former Revelations, to the exiſting Church. And tho' thoſe Prieſts under the Law, were generally Anti-prophetical, a Man cannot be ſo abſurd in his Imaginations, as to think that they ſhould know a Prophet to be of God, and at the ſame time, wittingly embrew their Hands in his Blood; for in the laſt and moſt heinous Inſtance, of their always reſiſting the Holy Ghoſt, they are acquitted of it by St. *Peter*, *Acts* iii. 15. 17. ſaying, *ye have denyed and killed the Prince of Life, and now Brethren I know, that through Ignorance ye did it, as did alſo your Rulers*, (the Prieſts,) and by St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* ii. 8. ſaying, *For had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory*; and in *Rom.* x. 2. *For I bear them Record, that they have a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge.* They, therefore the *Jews*, always perſecuted and rejected the Prophets upon ſome falſe Principles, whereon they firſt judged them, not to have been ſent of God; and theſe Principles are both in the Old and New Teſtament ſignifyed to us to be, ſome receiv'd Traditions and Doctrines of Men, *Iſa.* xxix. 13-15. *Mat.* xv. 6-9.

§ 37. Moreover, we find a Complaint on God's Part, againſt the Antient *Iſrael*, *Jer.* v. 31. ſaying, *a horrible Thing is committed in the Land; the Prophets propheſy falſly, and the Prieſts bear Rule by their Means, and my People love to have it ſo*; which intimates to us, that one Reaſon of their rejecting the true, was, that he always ſtood in Oppoſition to this Character of the falſe Ones. Now, whether there was any thing, in the Catholicks of thoſe Ages of the Chriſtian Church, who condemn'd the Inſpired under the Nickname of *Montaniſts*, that bore a Parallel, to the falſe Principles receiv'd, and Doctrines of Men taught among the *Jews*, whereupon they rejected the extraordinary Miniſters of God, is left to be determined by the Scripture Standard, upon the Merits of the Cauſe, at large herein exhibited. But this is apparent, from the whole which is ſaid of them, that the *Montaniſts* had nothing upon them, of the laſt mention'd Character of falſe Prophets, *viz.* that *the Prieſts bare Rule by their Means.* However, ſince the Spirit in the *Montaniſts*, had all along for two Hundred Years, reproved ſomewhat roughly, the growing Corruptions in the Church Diſcipline, and whatever was of Uſurpation in the ſettled Miniſtry; whether they did therein, fill up the Character of Chriſt's faithful Witneſs *Antipas*, which literally ſignifies Anti-pope, and on that Account were hardly dealt with, we leave alſo to further Enquiry, as a Matter well deſerving it.

§ 38.

§ 38. I have heard often that the Churches of Christ ſince the Reformation, proteſting againſt Popery, do allow the Decrees of the four firſt general Councils; and therefore the particular Determination of one of them, touching Perſons acted and ſpeaking by a Spirit above their own, may ſeem to be included in that Approbation. But ſince the Hiſtory of *Montaniſm*, reporting it, does affirm that it has never yet been accounted for, by any, and is in it ſelf unaccountable, I cannot but conclude, that this is a Caſe and Point to be excepted, and which the Proteſtant Churches have not approved, upon the Authority of thoſe general Councils. Nay, and what is more; whoever will pleaſe to conſider, that a general Council of the Church, being always neceſſarily filled up with a greater Number of the Neighbouring Biſhops, repreſenting the Country adjacent, than in Proportion can be, to repreſent the more diſtant Churches; the Proteſtant Churches, in what Point ſoever they do agree, do ſtand upon a better Foot therein, than the Authority of the Council at *Laodicea* did. Nevertheleſs, becauſe many People have ſo highly conceiv'd of the Church in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries, that they will ſcarce think it poſſible, they ſhould be ſo unequal Judges of Prophecy, that their Determination touching it, can be unaccountable; I ſubmit to their Conſideration, a ſort of Corruption in thoſe Ages, repreſented by a very celebrated Author, as followeth.

§ 39. Dr. *Mills* in his elaborate Preface to the *Greek* New Teſtament, acquaints us in theſe Terms: "To-"wards the End of the Fourth Century, the Tranſcribers "of Scripture Copies, uſed a Licentiouſneſs every where, "in corrupting and mixing the Text, with Criticiſms "ſcrabled on the Margin, or between the Lines, by an Im-"pudence, I know not how, much greater, than that of "preceeding times; ſo that all became marred; and in "particular, that in *Mat.* vi. 13. *For thine is the Kingdom "and the Power and the Glory, for ever*, was now firſt added "to the Lord's Prayer. Not that theſe things are to be im-"puted to the Biſhops of the Antient Church, whom *Gro-"tius* on *Luke* xix. 41. does injuriouſly and falſly charge "with preſuming to have ſo done; for, among all the "Heap of Additions, Subſtractions and other Variations "which we have diſcover'd in the Manuſcrips of the New "Teſtament; not one of them, was by the Authority of "the Governors Eccleſiaſtick, unleſs poſſibly by the Leſ-"ſons divided, there might be ſome ſuch Words, added

" or omitted, as *Jesus--beloved--in that Hour--Amen--Bre-*
" *thren--he that hath Ears to hear, let him hear*; all the rest
" were introduced into the Text, by the critical Annota-
" tions of the LEARNED, or by the Careleſneſs, Ig-
" norance and FORGERY of the Bookſellers. Now,
" to impute the Adulteration of Scripture, to the He-
" reticks, is a meer Fable, *Marcion* only excepted, who
" ſtood reproved; but it was the *Orthodox* and *Catholicks* a-
" lone, who either could, or did do it effectually.

§ 40. *Hierom* (ſays the ſame Author) coming into *Italy*
" about the Year 364. did convince many, that as to the
" Tranſlations of the New Teſtament into *Latin*, they
" were ſo far depraved, partly by the Heedleſneſs of Tran-
" ſcribers, and partly by Ignorant *Preſumptious Uſurpers*;
" that all things in them, were ſo mixed and confounded,
" eſpecially in the Goſpels, that there was an abſolute Ne-
" ceſſity, of reducing and reforming the whole, by the
" *Greek* Copies; for there was no poſſible remeding the
" Matter, by collating together the *Latin* Manuſcripts, ſee-
" ing that theſe did ſo monſtrouſly differ, the one from
" the other; that they no longer look'd like the Tranſcripts
" of any one certain Original, but rather as if they had
" been taken ſeverally, from a different Pattern. Such
" was then the State of the *Latin* Bibles, by the Report of
" *Hierom*, upon Examination into them; that of the Scrip-
" ture there was as many different Copies, as there were
" Volumns of it. On the other Side, *Hilary* commonly
" called *Ambroſiaſter*, living at the ſame time, tells us thus;
" We are ſays he, referr'd to the *Greek* Copies of Scripture
" as if they were not diſagreeing, the one from the other
" as well as the *Latin*; now, the contrary to this is ap-
" parent and proved from ſome *Latin* Copies of Scripture,
" in former times tranſlated from the antient *Greek* Manu-
" ſcripts, which the Simplicity of the times did preſerve.
" But afterwards, in the Buſtles about Hereticks, that
" Men s Minds came to be diſtorted by Diſſention, and
" things came to be wreſted in Diſpute, many things in
" the Text of both, were alter'd, according to Mens ſeveral
" Apprehenſions, that what ſeem'd good to the Man, might
" appear to be inſerted in the Text it ſelf. For this has
" the Study of Contention produced, becauſe the Diſpu-
" tant cannot prevail by the Authority of his own Affir-
" mation to confute his Opponent; therefore does he alter
" the Scripture, that he may thence quote his own Senſe
" for the Words of God, to the end that it might ſeem, as

" if

" if the Divine Authority, and not his Reaſoning determi-
" ned.

§ 41. " Not only thus was the Scripture mixed and
" marred, but (ſays Dr. *Mills*) about the end of the fourth
" Century, came forth a Book commonly call'd, *The Con-*
" *ſtitutions and Canons of the Apoſtles*, the latter of which,
were Thirty Five in Number, and in the laſt of them, was
" a Liſt of the Books of the Old and New Teſtament;
" and in this Liſt, the ſaid Conſtitutions of the Apoſtles
" were placed by the FORGERER, among the Writ-
" ings of the New Teſtament. Furthermore, about the
" End of the Fifth Century, *Anaſtaſius* reports, that at
" *Conſtantinople*, by the Encouragement of the Emperor,
" the Holy Goſpels were miſliked and corrected, as com-
" poſed by Writers, that were meer Idiots. Whence the
" ſaid Author had this Account, I know not (ſays Dr. *Mills*)
" but thus much is probable enough to have been true,
" that the Sophiſters of that City, and other teaching
" Doctors, who looked upon the barbarous Stile of the
" Goſpels, with ſcornful Contempt, might tranſact with
" the Emperor, about compiling anew the Hiſtory of the
" Goſpels; and ſetting forth the ſame in truer *Greek*; and
" poſſibly that impious Prince, might ſo far yield, to their
" nefarious Councils, that he might in earneſt think of re-
" forming the Goſpels, in this Manner; and perhaps the
" Enterprize it ſelf, was begun with; but nothing can be
" more certain, than that no ſuch Goſpels were ever pub-
" liſh'd.

§ 42. How little Reaſon therefore have we, to pin our Faith on the Church Catholick, in theſe Ages, wherein ſhe ſuffered the Fountains of Life to be poiſon'd and the Authors of it to go uncenſured; treading themſelves in the Way of *Marcion* the Heretick, and upbraiding thoſe with Enthuſiaſm, who would not ſuffer the leaſt Iota of the Goſpel to fall to the Ground? Whether ſhe, the Catholick Church made herſelf herein a Patroneſs of falſe Prophets and Prophecy, may well deſerve a further Enquiry; but it is certain, that thoſe who looked with ſcornful Contempt, upon the Apoſtolick Writings were never likely to judge righteouſly, of exiſtent Propheſyings; and thoſe who found Fault with the Standard, how were they capable of approving, what was good by it? But particularly, it is remarkable, that the Forgerer of the *Apoſtolick Conſtitutions*, for an effectual Vindication of the Sentence paſſed by the Council of *Laodicea* againſt the *Montaniſts*; did by a pious Arti-

fice, inſert among them a Leſſon diſtinct, for the ſolemn excluding from every Chriſtian Aſſembly, all Energumens or Perſons prophetically acted by a Spirit above themſelves; ſo that ſuch of the Catholicks who could own the ſaid Book of Divine Authority, needed no other Juſtification of their Proceedings therein, and had that Book been then owned, they would doubtleſs have pleaded it as they did not. And finally, if it be Wiſdom, we muſt own that *the Children of this World are wiſer in their Generation, than the Children of Light*; for, whilſt they could alter the Old Scriptures as they pleaſed, and impoſe new Ones by Wholeſale, they, even the *Aſiatick* Catholicks chiefly, took Care to leave the Revelations of St. *John*, wholly out of their Teſtament, that they might never be afrightned with the Remindment, of the true and righteous Judgments of the Lord our God, when He ſhall judge the great Whore, which corrupted the Earth with her Fornication; and ſhall avenge the Blood of his Servants at her Hand, even the Blood of Prophets and of Saints, found in her, *Rev.* xviii. 24. compared with *Chap.* xix. 2.

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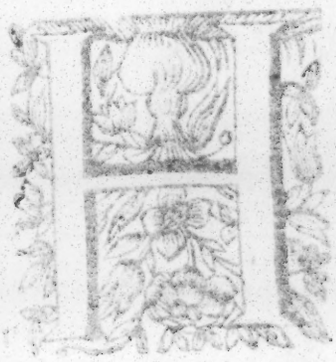

THE SPIRIT of PROPHECY DEFENDED, &c.

PART IV.

Of Modern Opinions *concerning* PROPHECY.

§ 1. HAVING the Happineſs to be born, within the Pale of the Chriſtian Church viſible, and the invaluable Advantage of an Education in thoſe Parts of it wherein the Treaſures of the Divine Word lie open for all Men, freely to enrich themſelves, in ſeveral Degrees, with the knowledge of them; we ſtand in Need of no Apology, for ſearching after Wiſdom thence, to inſtruct our Judgment touching the Manner and Evidences of God revealing; ſeeing that Error in thoſe Points, betrays us into Sin, as well as in others, and that even into one of the very greateſt; of blaſpheming, or ſpeaking evil againſt the Holy Ghoſt, by aſcribing his Operations to the Devil.

Moreover,

Moreover, ſince there is nothing more univerſally acknowledged by all Chriſtians, that reject the Errors and Uſurpations of thoſe, who at this Day do appropriate to themſelves the Stile of Catholicks, and of the Catholick Church, as the Accuſers and Condemners of Prophecy, in the Third and Fourth Century did; I ſay, ſeeing there is nothing more fundamental to the Reformation, than the joint Acknowledgment of all Parties, that *the Scriptures are a Rule perfect, and compleatly ſufficient, for our Inſtruction in the Knowledge of God*; it follows thence, that the Scripture is a clear and full Standard deciſive, to determine by, what is, and what is not Prophecy Divine; for in all other Points, *Proteſtants* are agreed on this one Head, and do juſtify their diſſenting from the *Catholicks* upon it; and upon the ſame Foot it is, that every Subdiviſion of *Proteſtants* among themſelves, does claim to warrant it ſelf ſeverally, in diſſenting one from another. From all which, nothing can be more evident, than that the joint Concurrence of all Chriſtians profeſſing the Reformation, centers in this one Point, that the Scriptures are a Rule perfect and compleatly ſufficient, for our Inſtruction in the Knowledge of God: Wherefore, upon this fundamental Principle it is, that whatſoever appears diſſonant from, and contrary to that Rule, ſtands condemn'd, and juſtly ſo, by all Parties; what Authority ſoever, either Eccleſiaſtical or Civil, has or can determine otherwiſe. On the other ſide, every thing that ſtands allowed and approved, and appears clearly ſo, upon the Scripture-foot, is by the ſame joint Conſent of all Parties, equally confeſſed, to have the Force and Sanction of Divine Authority for it.

§ 2. This being a Principle without Contradiction among, *Proteſtants* univerſally receiv'd, we are excuſed from any Need of demonſtrating it to be juſt; but inſtead thereof we have hitherto, and do truſt by the Grace of God, that we always ſhall build upon it, as an inconteſtible Foundation. Accordingly, in the Firſt Part of this Treatiſe, we have accurately ſearched for *Divine Wiſdom*, as more valuable than all ſhining Duſt and Stones. The Knowledge meerly of human Sciences, may indeed take the Place of the latter, and ſo be valuable and worth the digging for; but if it muſt ſtand in Competition with the former, then it it is but as a Diamond to the Sun. Upon this Foundation we have laid down what Diſcoveries occurr'd touching God revealing Himſelf from the ſacred Text, that they might be in the Place of a Helm, to guide and ſteer our

Courſe,

Courſe, in the Judgment to be made of our Sovereign's Ways in Prophecy. Upon which Diſcoveries of the ſupreme Law, and the Inſtitutions of the only Lawgiver to his Church, we have in the conſequence of our Argument, taken it for granted, that whatſoever ſtood at any Time allowed and approved by that perfect and compleatly ſufficient Standard, ought ever to have been receiv'd for the Voice of God prophetically. Otherwiſe, that is, if Prophecy approved from Scripture, was not to be receiv'd as the Voice of God, I can ſee no Uſe or Purport of the Appeal, in *Iſa.* viii. 20. *To the Law and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this Word,* (the Teſt and Standard,) *it is becauſe there is no Light in them*: Nor of that uſed by our Saviour Himſelf, *John.* v. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal Life, and they are they which teſtify of me*: And elſewhere, *how read ye?* Nor could there be any Uſe of the Conduct of the Apoſtles, in conſtantly proving their Inſpiration, by its Agreement with the previous Scriptures; in particular, that of St. *Paul, Acts* xxvi. 22. *Witneſſing both to ſmall and great, ſaying none other Things, than thoſe which the Prophets and Moſes did ſay, ſhould come.* If then, after the Apoſtles and their Writings, the Scriptures Divine, were no leſs than before, a perfect and compleatly ſufficient Standard and Touchſtone, they muſt be ſo, as they ever were before, a Rule equally valid and obligatory on both ſides; that is, if by ſome Manifeſtation, a Man who appear'd to be acted by a Power above himſelf, and ſo to be a Prophet, ſpake not according to the Law and Prophetick Teſtimones of God precedent, he was to be rejected; but if he were approved and juſtified from thence, he was to be receiv'd, according to the Apoſtle's Rule, of holding faſt that which appear'd to be good upon proving all Things ſo.

§ 3. Having thus in the Firſt Part of this Treatiſe, to the beſt of my Ability laid down what the Law and Teſtimony Scriptural of God, do afford, for the Knowledge of his Ways in Prophecy, according to the Standard of which, the Divinely Inſpir'd ought to be receiv'd by the exiſtent Church: In the Second Part it is proved to a Demonſtration, by a Cloud of Witneſſes inconteſtible, that the Church of Chriſt did acknowledge ſuch Prophets, ſucceſſively for the Term of 300 Years exiſting, and thereby they did ſubmit to the poſitive Commands of God, that his Voice immediate ſhould ever be obeyed. It was never in all theſe primitive Ages of the Chriſtian Church, any more than in the

the *Jewish*, insisted on, that the admitting of subsequent immediate Inspiration of God, did supersede, undermine, or disannul the Validity of previous Revelation. Nor was it once in that Time, advanced by any one, that Inspiration was ceased and extinct, with the Death of the primary Apostles, nor so much as that it was needless. But according to the fundamental Principle already proved, that a Messenger of God, or one extraordinarily commission'd to signify his Will to Mankind, ought to be acknowledg'd, and listen'd to with Fear; there was nothing left to the Church at that Age, wherein he appear'd, but to examine his Testimony by the perfect and sufficiently compleat Rule of receiv'd Scripture, and if it were Standard by that, he was as rightfully to be admitted, as rejected if it was not. And for this their Submission and Obedience to the Prophetick Spirit, they not only built upon the Foundation of the Prophets of the Old Testament, who all with one Consent declare it to be Rebellion, not to do so; but upon the positive Declaration of Christ Himself, *John* xiii. 20. *He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your Words, it shall be more tolerable*, &c. *Mat.* x. 14. Moreover, that the primitive Christians were in this Point of honouring and reverentially esteeming Prophecy, built upon the joint Foundation of the Apostles and their Writings, as well as those of Prophets precedent, appears by the Confession of the *Jews* themselves, concerning St. *Paul*, *Acts* xxiii. 9. *If a Spirit or an Angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God*; and by the Apostolick Injunctions, *Heb.* xiii. 7, 17. *Obey and submit your selves to such, as are Guides to ye, who have spoken to you, the Word of God; and to every one that helpeth and laboureth with us*, 1 Cor. xvi. 16. They were also reverentially observant therein, of other Laws of Christ, as these; *Despise not Prophesyings; and he that despiseth you*, (Prophesying,) *despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*, Luke x. 16. *There is one Body and one Spirit, therefore Christ is the Head of that Body, and the Church is subject to him*, that is, to the Spirit, that *receiveth of his, and testifieth of him.* From these, and many more Texts, the Church of the first Ages did think it highly criminal, from the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets under Christ, to quench or extinguish by Limitations of their own Invention, the Prophetick Spirit speaking. And this their Reverence to Christ was regulated in proving all Things Spiritual, by that Rule, *Rom.* xii. 6. *If any prophesy, let them prophesy according to the Analogy of Faith*; no Man, in

that

that Caſe, ſay they, can forbid them to propheſy; but *if any Man preach any other Goſpel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accurſed*, Gal. i. 9.

§ 4. The Foundation then being laid, that the Scriptures are a Rule perfect and compleatly ſufficient, for the proving all things touching Prophecy; upon this Foundation, unto the End of the Third Century, a Man propheſying, being approved by the Standard and eſtabliſhed Teſt, had Liberty allowed of Preaching in the Church, and the Eſtabliſhment of Prophets in the Miniſtry thereof, was expected in thoſe Ages to be perpetually permanent, according to that in 1 *Cor.* xii. 28. *God hath ſet ſome in the Church, Firſt, Apoſtles, Secondarily, Prophets, Thirdly, Teachers.* But in the juſt concluded Part of this Treatiſe, we have ſhewed, how in the ſame Ages, there aroſe a Sort of Men in the Chriſtian Church, who would not ſubmit themſelves to Chriſt, in his Prophetick Teſtimony, and manifeſt Abode with her. And inſtead of being determined in their Proof and Trial of Prophecy, by the perfect and compleatly ſufficient Rule for it; they like the *Jews*, who always withſtood the Holy Ghoſt, invented a manifold Standard of their own, to try it by. And here, not to enumerate the Meaſures and Grounds, at large recited there, upon which at length, the Church collectively united under *Conſtantine*, did firſt by ſevere Edicts of Perſecution, and then by the ſeveral Acts of General Councils, in Effect ſuppreſs all Prophecy by a Law. Thus much ſuffices to recollect, that the Catholick Church viſible paſſed a Determination, importing in the Effect, that thenceforth, *whoever ſpake by a Spirit or Power above himſelf, or believed any other Man to ſpeak ſo*, ſhould not only be excluded a Communion with the Body of Chriſt, but even denied to bear from any ſuch Baptiſm, the very Name of a Chriſtian. By that concluſive Law, the Chriſtian Church viſible did by any Thing that appears, manifeſt it ſelf much more than ever the *Jewiſh*, to be *a rebellious People, lying Children, Children that will not hear the Law of the Lord; which ſay to the See-ers, ſee not; and to the Prophets, propheſy not unto us right Things, ſpeak unto us ſmooth Things, propheſy Deceits; get ye out of the Way, turn aſide out of the Path, cauſe the Holy One of Iſrael to ceaſe from before us.*

§ 5. For the Explanation of my Meaning, in the Paragraph above, the Reader is referr'd to the Argument and Scope of the Third Part of this Treatiſe, and the preſent Concluſion here from it, is, That if the Sentence againſt the *Montaniſts*, was not regularly and juſtly built upon Scrip-

Scripture Proofs of their being acted by an evil Spirit, then the whole Proceſs was void in it ſelf, there being no other Authority, on which a Prophet can be determined falſe. Now in this Appeal, from the Declaration of the Catholick Church viſible, unto the Scripture, as the ſole deciſive Judge, we conceive that we ſtand in this Point, upon the ſame Foot, that all Proteſtants in other Points do, in their renouncing the Authority of the Church, in any Thing whatſoever, wherein ſhe plainly deviated from, or contradicted the ſole and compleat Rule of Faith. Now the Subject herein treated of, is certainly a Point of Faith, and of great Moment too, that is to ſay, whether we ſhould receive or reject the Word of the Lord ſpoken to us, by a Meſſenger of his; ſo that we are not arguing about Trifles, ſuch as may be done, or left undone, without evident Sin, that is, without the Breach evidently of the poſitive Commands of God, whilſt we are pleading for the Subjects of *Faith once deliver'd to the Saints.* But having thus fix'd the Rule and Standard whereby we are to meaſure, and the ſame being ſuch, as always was, or might have been known; the Ignorance of it indulged, could at no Time, nor can excuſe thoſe who did, or ſhall determine by any other. For it can be no ſmall Crime and Preſumption, whether in private Perſons, or ſtated Communities, to preſcribe arbitrary Rules, whereby the Spirit of God in his Agency, is to be limited and determined of. But the State of the Caſe, in relation to the primitive Church, has been already fully diſcuſſed, and it ſufficiently appears to be the Upſhot of it, that towards the Year, 400. the Principles prevailing univerſally, and the Conſtitutions thereof authoritative, could not in any ways we know of, admit Propheſying, however truly Divine, to be acknowledg'd any longer in it; which is the reaſon that I have not pretended to carry on ſome Evidences of the Prophetick Spirit ſubſiſting beyond the Account thereof, in the Second Part tho' it is clear from *Rev.* xii. 17. that the Spirit of Prophecy did continue longer, becauſe the *Dragon* did purſue thoſe who had the Teſtimony of Jeſus, in the Wilderneſs Eſtate of the Church. And for the ſame reaſon, I ſhall not offer at any Proof here, of true Prophecy, either precedently to, or attending the Time of the Reformation; becauſe the Principles univerſally prevailing among Chriſtians, could never by any thing I can find, from the Period mention'd above, unto this Day, ſuffer a true Prophet to paſs for other than a Monſter, a Heretick, a Fanatick or

Madman,

Madman, an Impoſtor or Blaſphemer: For, not only the Fables of *Apollonius* and others, which have been inſtanced to have been poured out like a Flood, to bear down all Truth of Fact, in the Caſe of the *Montaniſts*, were and have been to this Day admitted; but innumerable others alſo have been coined of them, by later Ages (ſaith the Author of their Hiſtory,) leſt the Sentence of the Church upon them, ſhould ever be known to have paſs'd upon little or no Ground.

§ 6. The Author of *Montaniſm* takes Notice of ſome particular Sects, who were called *Montaniſts*, after the Condemnation of thoſe, whoſe Cauſe we have examined, and ſeems juſtify'd; which Sects might poſſibly pretend to Revelation, and under that Claim be guilty of dreadful Abominations, all which were put to the Account of the other, who were innocent and free from any ſuch. Which courſe of arguing, if the Thing be weighed impartially, amounts to the ſubſequent Concluſion; that is, becauſe there were falſe Prophets, therefore there was none true; or, becauſe Inſpiration Diabolical produced ſuch and ſuch horrible Effects, therefore all Inſpiration is to be concluded Diabolical; and becauſe the Devil openly and evidently works in ſome, therefore he does the ſame in all the reſt, transformed into an Angel of Light. By what Ways of Argument it was, that the *Sadduciſm* and Contempt of Revelation, by a Breach wilfully made in the antient Scripture Banks (touching the trying Prophetick Spirits) did enter like a ſwelling Sea, and deluge all the Chriſtian World, ſo that there is no longer any Footſteps to be diſcover'd of the antient Faith of God revealing, I conceive, has already in ſome Meaſure appear'd. In all this, I am not pleading in Behalf of any Inſpiration, which can by the perfect and compleatly ſufficient Rule, the Scriptures, be condemn'd; but for ſuch only as ought to be receiv'd and acquitted by it, from arbitrary and uſurped Rules of judging. And ſurely, it cannot be eſteem'd otherwiſe than a Thing very laudible for us, to act in all Matters relating to God, uniformly and of a Piece: Thus, if I as a *Proteſtant*, ſtand bound to believe, that the Scripture is a perfect and compleatly ſufficient Rule, and whatever is diſſonant from, and contrary to it, I am thereby bound alſo, to reject and deny, as an Uſurpation in the Church; it follows of courſe, that in this Point of God extraordinarily communicating of Himſelf, I am not to favour, but contrariwiſe oppoſe all Uſurpations againſt God; and for my ſelf, I am in Duty to Him bound, ſolely to

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examine Things by the Sanctuary-Ballance, and to be determined in my Judgment one Way or other, as that turns the Scale. In fine, I am able to discern no reason as a Christian, why I should be partial in the Law of God, and say it is a compleat Rule in other Points, but very defective and insufficient in this; and therefore needs human Wisdom to supply the Deficiency; or conclude that it ought to be observ'd and obey'd without Reserve, in all other Cases, but not at all, in this one.

§ 7. Having thus explained my self (I hope sufficiently) to obviate undue Constructions in the whole of this Treatise, both of what is already passed, and what follows; I have laid down, and according to my Capacity gone upon this one fundamental Principle, that the written Word of God is a sufficient and compleat Rule to lead our Judgment with respect to Prophecy or Revelation, whether in Times past, present or to come. If I have any ways erred or mistaken in the Construction of this Rule, I am willingly desirous to be set to rights, from it and by it; I say, from that, and from that alone, seeing that there is no Authority which can substitute another, such as is any ways at all satisfactory in this Point. *Let God be* acknowledg'd *true* in his Word, *and every Man a Liar*, who would add to it by Prescriptions impos'd, or diminish from it, by denying the same to be a sufficient Rule. The Clergy indeed, in respect to their Office, ought to be consider'd and respected on that Account: But whenever they collectively, or separately, either under a Body National, or Provincial, or one alone, or many severally (for the Case alters not) advance any Thing positive, which is not warrantable by the Word of God; in such a Case, I think they may, nay they ought (by all those who have any due Regard to the first and the great Commandment) to be withstood equally as any other Men; and even more too, lest their Character should be abused, to the great Dishonour of God, with respect to the supreme Authority of his Word. For we are bound to regard and esteem them distinguishably, meerly and only for their Work Sake, and as that proper Work, for which we ought to esteem them, is defined, and limited expresly to teach and be Examples of a Scripture Obedience unto God, we must strangely pervert the Text, when we esteem them as Ministers, in contradicting it; upon this Ground, I have not judged any Reverence, due to the *Apollinarian* Bishops, whilst in the Subject of this Argument, they seperated themselves from God, set up many human Institutions

tions, ſtood in Oppoſition to the ſacred Text, and themſelves taught and gave Examples of the utmoſt Contempt, of the prophetical Word, the Divine Guide, and ſupreme Maſter in the Church.

§ 8. In like Manner, the clothing themſelves with the awful Stile of the Catholick Church, which is the higheſt Character that the Clergy can ever aſſume; could never, at leaſt in my Opinion, alter the very Nature of obvious Reproach, perſonal calumniating, and palpable Lying, which the Conſtitution of Chriſtianity, determines for Crimes, of a hateful Kind. Therefore when I found the Torrent of that Sort ſo turgedly riſing, in the Account of the *Montaniſt* Hiſtorian, that he himſelf ſometimes endeavour'd to ſtem and check it; I on my Part even open'd the Flood Gates, and let it paſs, without taking any Notice of many Particulars, which might eaſily have been expoſed for Falſities: And this I did the rather, becauſe that with Men of Sobriety in Judgment, that reflect upon the Treatment which the true Prophets in Scripture found, it is eaſy to gather, that theſe and ſuch like Practices, were the very Spears and Arrows and ſharp Swords, wherewith conjointly with cruel Mockings, the Giants in Infidelity, did purſue the deſtituted Meſſengers of God, until they puſhed them to wander up and down half naked and ſtarved, in Deſerts and Mountains, and at length, to ſeek a Refuge, in Dens and Caves of the Earth. If then in the whole of this Subject, Chriſtian Men will keep their Ears open to Clamor and Brawling on the one Side, and ſhut their Eyes from diſcerning by the Light of God's Word on the other, what is conſonant to it, and under that Poſture will judge of the Point before us, we muſt content our ſelves to ſay, with Relation to it; if the Foundations be deſtroyed, and Truth is periſh'd from the Earth, what can the Adherers to it, do?

§ 9. But if there remains among Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, any impartial Equity, or unprejudiced Love to Truth, no Caſe requires it more from us, than that of a prophetick Summons, to have Recourſe to our firſt Principles. Whereas on the contrary to what it ought to be, there is ſo little Concern among Men in this Point, that all Scripture Rules for the Trial of Spirits ſtand for nothing, on the Side of approving what is good by them; altho' a little Noiſe of evil Report, ſuch as was always upon the true Prophets, ſuffices to condemn any Claim to Inſpiration, without the leaſt Care or Fear, for that Sentence. And

this Propenſity to condemn a thing unheard and unexamined, can be little wonder'd at, whilſt on the one Part, no Principles are allowed and fixed upon but anti-ſcriptural, whereon the Spirit of Prophecy, might have Juſtice done Him; and on the other, all the Caracteriſticks and peculiar Properties of the Holy Spirit ſo ſpeaking, are eaſily and readily granted over to the evil One. For I know very well, that there are Men now-a-days, who will allow that the Devil himſelf can make as full and clear a Confeſſion of all the Prerogatives due to *Our Emanuel*, as the very Teſtimony of Jeſus, the Spirit of Prophecy can, altho' the primitive Chriſtians, in the Caſe of the *Sybils*, denied it, and the Scripture alſo does ſo abundantly in 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. And in all the Places, wherein an Appeal is made to the foregoing Teſtimonies of it. The Magnifiers of the Devil however, will go further ſtill, and do ſay that he may Preach like a *Boanerges*, Pray like a Saint, and Praiſe the Lord like an Angel of Light, and urge Men to Repentance as forceably as *John* the *Baptiſt*; nay, I have heard a very Pious Chriſtian aver, that he may for a Time produce Sanctification, genuine and true. But whence Men have gather'd this Kind of Divinity, which reproaches the Teacher's Office as well as the Prophet's, I know not, and from the Scriptures I find no Room for ſuppoſing any ſuch Caſe ever poſſible, in the Point of prophetical Preaching: Nevertheleſs, if ſuch a Caſe muſt be ſuppoſed, Chriſt our Head, who has triumphed, and led Captivity captive, with whom is the reſidue of the Spirit to give, has promiſed to be with his Church, and to Him in a Caſe, wherein the Scripture does not decide, muſt the Judgment and Appeal be left. Man's Authority reaches no further, than to try and judge all Things by the Standard of Prophecy, undoubtedly Divine, and where that does not decide, he ought, he can go no further, without ſetting himſelf up in the very judicial Seat of Chriſt. Upon ſuch an Emergency as above-mention'd, if Men will be ſo preſumptuous, as without any competent Scripture-Foundation, to allow it poſſible, there ought then to be ſolemn Supplication to the Head and Governour of his Body, the Church, to yield unto her the neceſſary Aid of his own Spirit, arbitrarily to paſs Sentence, by the Gift and Spiritual Power of Diſcernment. And whereas, no one can by the Law and Teſtimonies of God, be accounted a Prophet or ſpiritual Perſon, without ſome viſible Manifeſtation of a Spirit above his own exhibited; in ſuch Caſe, if it be poſſible, that an Emergency as above-mention'd,

mention'd, can be ſuppoſed, the greater Manifeſtation of Power ſupernatural is to determine between the Accuſer and the Accuſed.

§ 10. But upon all this, if any Man in the Name of Chriſt, and giving Him all the Rights due to Him, ſpeaks prophetically to Exhortation, Edification and Comfort, by 1 *Cor.* xii. 4. it cannot be by any other Power, but by the Holy Ghoſt. Wherefore, and from the Harmony of Scripture Teſtimonials, we have not granted the Caſe aforemention'd to be poſſible, and mention'd it only, as the raſh Headineſs of a few ignorant Men, ſo that we need inſiſt no longer on it. Nevertheleſs, if any Prophetical Perſon, without much of Doctrine, Exhortation, Prayer, Praiſe, or other Exerciſes, edifying to the Church, or Aſſembly of Believers, ſhould perform ſome extraordinary Act, with the ſimple Confeſſion of Chriſt aright; we have in *Luke* ix. 50. a Preſident given by our Lawgiver, ſaying, *Forbid him not, becauſe he followeth not us; for he that is not againſt us, is for us.* Here, we are to obſerve, that there was no Oppoſition in the Perſon, that followed not our Saviour; but if we can poſſibly ſuppoſe a Caſe, wherein two Spiritual Perſons are Opponents, in any kind, and both equally ſound in the Subjects of Faith taught, there the *Evidence of greater Power* ſupernaturally exerted, is to determine; which is clear in a different Occaſion, from the Rule given by our Lord, *Mat.* xii. 29, 30. and *Luke* xi. 21--23. where *the ſame* being firſt exerted on his Part, the Concluſion thence, and upon that Evidence drawn is, *He that is not with me, is againſt me, and he that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth*; for our great Maſter caſt out Devils that confeſſed Him. The like Proof alſo, touching a Maſterly Power in Caſes ſupernatural, we find mention'd by St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* iv. 19--21. and 2 *Cor.* 10. 6. But, in all of this Treatiſe, both preceding and ſubſequent, we are limited to the general Rules, laid down in Holy Writ, by which Perſons uninſpir'd ought to judge and be determined, and therefore we ceaſe to treat of Points, that are proper only to the ſummary Ways of the Spirit extraordinary, to determine by.

§ 11. Our Subject being to ſhew, that uninſpired Perſons are limited in their Judgment of a Prophetick Spirit, by the Rules contained in the Scripture-Canon, and that they ought not to arrogate to themſelves, a Power of acting arbitrarily therein; we have in the Second Part of this Treatiſe, made appear, that the Opinion of the pureſt Times of Chriſtianity was clear in this Point. Which Opinion

and Practice of the Ages, next immediately ſucceeding to that of the Apoſtles, is not only ſignificative of the Honour and Reverence then paid to the Spirit in the Church, and is further provable in its Equity, from the Nature of a ſupernatural Agency; but as we take it, is plainly included, in ſeveral Texts of the New Teſtament: As, where the Apoſtle affirms, that, *the natural Man cannot know the Things of the Spirit of God, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcern'd, and that the ſpiritual Man himſelf is judged of no Man,* 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. *For what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, ſave the Spirit of Man which is in him? Even ſo the Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God,* ver. 11. And thus, the Spirits of the Prophets are ſubject only to ſuch as are Prophets, according to what was given to every one by the Spirit, *to one the Word of Knowledge, to another Prophecy, to another the diſcerning of Spirits*; therefore, when ſome Prophets ſpake two or three, others were to judge, *viz.* they who were known to have the Gift of diſcerning Spirits. We do not hereby aim to exclude Mens judging of Things Spiritual, as far as the comparing of them with the written Word, does enable them, and they are thence entitled to do; for to this Courſe we may apply the Apoſtle's Appeal; *I ſpeak as to wiſe Men, judge ye what I ſay:* But this Appeal of the Apoſtle, which was made unto Men, in every Thing enriched by God, eſpecially in all Knowledge, ſo that they came behind in no Gift extraordinary of the Spirit, is far from being a Warrant to univerſal Libertiniſm, in aſſuming to be wiſe in their own Spirits, above what is written by Inſpiration, for the deciding upon a Prophetical Appearance. And now to proceed, from the extraordinary Way of judging, whereof we have but occaſionally ſpoken very briefly, to the main Tenor of our Argument, touching the more general and ſtanding Precepts on that Head, and how far Men are willing to ſubmit their private Opinions to them.

§ 12. We having recited, that in and after the Fifth Century, the Church viſible fell under ſuch a Conſtitution, that the Holy Scripture was no longer allowed for a Standard, whereby any Thing of true Prophecy, for publick Edification, could be acknowledg'd. The numerous Examples of Viſion and Revelations, vented and own'd in the ſucceeding Times of dark *Popery*, that carried all of them evident Tendencies, to flatter and promote the growing Corruptions, in the Doctrine and Diſcipline of the Chriſtian Church, are no juſt Exception; for, the general

Rules

Rules of the Holy Text ought always in this Caſe to decide; and if an Angel from Heaven could bring any other Meſſage or Goſpel, than what agrees with the Tenour of the precedent Oracles Divine, the ſame ought to have been at all Times, and even now among *Proteſtants* rejected with the utmoſt Abhorrence. This Allowance therefore, of falſe Prophecy by the *Papiſts*, is duly condemn'd by us, and there is no Queſtion upon this Head: The Queſtion is, whether we do not on the contrary, ſuppreſs even as well as they, the Authority of God's Word, to denominate what is true of that kind. But in this latter Point, that is, whether the Written Word is allowed its free Courſe and due Prerogative among *Proteſtants*, any more than among the *Papiſts*, to warrant and authorize the Belief and Acceptance of what is true Propheſying, by the Law and Teſtimonies of Scripture, is the proper Subject of this Part of the preſent Treatiſe, to examine and enquire into.

§ 13. The *Papiſts* indeed are embodied under a tyrannical Hierarchy in the Church, and the ſecular Powers are ſo blindly devoted to ſerve that Uſurpation, that not only a true Prophet, but a common Chriſtian avowing *the Truth as it is in Jeſus*, does paſs with them for a Heretick, and under that Name being concluded for the chief of Criminals, he ſuffers as a Malefactor of the higheſt Dye. But there is a wide Difference between them and the *Proteſtants*, both in reſpect to any Uſurpation in the Church, and Cruelty in the Secular Powers, touching Matters religious. Nevertheleſs, if we reflect duly upon our Foundations, the Reformed do not build themſelves wholly upon a Renunciation of Errors in the Church of *Rome*, but do profeſs to adhere to the Scripture, as their ſole Sovereign Law, and to the Pattern of the firſt and pureſt Ages of Chriſtianity, as their Preſident in all Things. And to apply this to the Subject in hand, the Reformed Churches do well to diſown and deteſt all Impoſitions of Doctrine or Worſhip, which were introduced among the Catholicks, under the Colour of Viſions and Revelations; becauſe theſe being tried by Scripture, are found to come from the Father of Lies, the deceiving and falſe Spirit, who would lead us aſtray, from the Simplicity of the Goſpel, or Divine Meſſage by the Prophets, in Holy Writ. On the other ſide, Whilſt falſe Viſion is prevalent among the *Papiſts*, under the Sanction of the Authority of the Church, which allows, and as it were verifies, or makes it current; it muſt be confeſs'd, that at the ſame Time, they in advancing the Authority of the

Church, do utterly diſallow the written Word of God, to conclude any thing in Favour of *true Prophecy*. And in this latter Caſe, the *Proteſtants* in all Countries, and the Clergy, in every Sect of Chriſtians, if they unanimouſly concur to advance Principles touching this Subject, which are anti-ſcriptural, and yet do pretend, that every Spirit propheſying ſhould be tried by thoſe arbitrary Rules; thus far, and in this Point, they join Hands with the *Papiſts*, and in their Uſurpation, not only over the Written Word, but the Prerogative of the Eſſential and Eternal Word.

§ 14. In the Caſe above-mention'd therefore, we conceive, that *Proteſtants* do not ſincerely and truly ſeek to be reformed, according to the Pattern of the pureſt Ages of Chriſtianity, as long as they ſhall continue to withſtand the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaking in the Scriptures; and by their univerſal Concurrence, do aſſume an Authority to determine touching every Spirit Prophetical, upon Rules meerly human. I am ſure, there is nothing neceſſarily included, in our Profeſſion as *Proteſtants*, that does open a Door to *Sadduciſm*, and the Contempt of Revelation; but on the contrary, we are from the Scriptures taught to have no Communion with *Belial*, or Men under no Yoke and Government, from the Laws of the Spirit of Chriſt; and that the true Believer has no more Agreement with an Infidel, than Light with Darkneſs. And here, I muſt confeſs to the Honour of the Reformation, that I know no one Point, except that of running down of *Enthuſiaſm*, without diſtinguiſhing the true from the falſe, wherein all the Parts and Sects of it, and the Clergy or ſtated Teacher, Paſtor or Speaker, of every one, do (by all that I can gather, either of my own or foreign Countries) with one Voice, agree to advance Principles and Doctrines, clearly unſcriptural; whereof we ſhall here ſubjoin a ſmall Specimen, taken from the late Writings of Divines, of ſeveral different Communions, and Opinions in other Things. Now the Conſent of all Parties, and the *Miniſters* of each, to ſuffer unſcriptural Poſitions on this Point, to paſs unreproved, and without any mutual Debate, ſuch as they never will paſs over in any other Caſe, without Reproof alternatively, has been (as I conceive) the Cauſe of that Darkneſs and Error in the Point of Revelation Prophetick, which the Reformed Churches are not univerſally chargable with, on any other Subject, that I know of.

§ 15. But becauſe Men are inſenſible of any Evil, attending ſuch a Practice, therefore, before we come to examine into

into the falſe Principles ſo advanced, we here propoſe to the Reader's timely Conſideration, a Paſſage in the Preface of *William Nicholls*, Doctor of Divinity, to his Book called, *A Conference with a Deiſt*, " The ſpreading Infidelity of " Deiſm, (ſays he) unleſs a Stop be put to it, will be the " Ruin of theſe Kingdoms. and force Heaven to pour out " the laſt Vials of its Wrath upon us. *Socinians*, *Papiſts* " and *Schiſmaticks*, tho' they are are guilty of grievous and " dangerous Errors, yet the worſt of them maintain ſome " Part of the Ground Work of Chriſtianity ſtill; but *De-* " *iſts* who diſown a Revelation, make our whole Religion " an Impoſture, and all that have to do with it, either " Cheats or Fools. So that, we who are Miniſters of the " Goſpel, are highly concerned to overthrow thoſe Princi- " ples, which tend to the Subverſion of our common Chri- " ſtianity, and to exert our utmoſt Power againſt theſe " Opinions, which debauch and damn ſo many Men, whoſe " Souls we have the Charge of. Nay further, there is the " greateſt Danger from theſe *Infidel Opinions*, becauſe they " are eſpouſed by Men of *all Parties*, and by many of " thoſe who join themſelves with ſome particular Body of " Chriſtians. Now becauſe ſuch *Infidels* lie herded among " all Sects of Chriſtians, as they are not ſo eaſily diſcern'd, " ſo they are not ſo vigorouſly oppoſed, and by this Means " they have of late gained ſuch Strength, that now they " begin to look formidable; and it is dreadful to conſider " what vaſt Numbers of Men are poiſon'd by theſe *Infidel* " *Principles*. But the greateſt Encouragement which Infi- " delity meets with, is from ſome Philoſophical Gentle- " men, who find that the Scripture ſeems to contradict ſome " Notions in Philohſopy, that they have eſpouſed."

§ 16. The Greatneſs of the Evil herein repreſented, being above all other Evils that do or can afflict the Church, and wound the Honour of Chriſt, ought doubtleſs to engage the Miniſtry againſt it, with more Application and Ardency, than any other Point. For, if we conſider them as Stewards of the Houſhold, they are to deal out that which is moſt neceſſary, in the firſt Place; and if they are entruſted with the Word of God on Record, they are rightly to diſtribute the Word of Truth, and not to be partial in their interpreting the Divine Law, ſo as to conceal ſome Parts of it, or paſs them over without Concern; much leſs to concur in promoting the Principles of Infidelity, inſtead of overthrowing them with all their Might. But, whether they have diſcharged their Duty, with reſpect to the Sub-

ject of this Treatiſe, or rather hidden the Key of Knowledge touching it; whether they have exerted their Office, in caſting down the Imaginations of *Saddncees* and *Deiſts*, the Scorners of all Revelation, with that Vigilance and Zeal, they ought to have done, will appear in ſome Meaſure, by the following Sheets.

CHAP. II.

Of Modern Opinions concerning PROPHECY.

§ 1. UPon the Foundation laid down in the preceeding Chapter, that the Scripture is a compleat and deciſive Rule, for Chriſtians to judge upon, touching the Spirit of Prophecy, it has been the ſole Scope of this Treatiſe to reduce all things to it, and to oppoſe human Impoſitions. Without any retroſpect therefore into times paſs'd, ſince the Period in the Second Part mention'd, I will ſuppoſe and take for granted, that there is no Part of the Church viſible now on Earth, better acquainted with the Scriptures in general, than that in *England*; we will alſo ſuppoſe and take for granted, that there is no other Country wherein the written Word of God has a more free Courſe, and is allowed to be pleaded and argued as the ſole deciſive Judge in all other Points whatſoever, except this of the Subject hereof. But as we have no Concern, in this preſent Argument, with other Matters among Chriſtians hotly debated, we conceive that the ſame Rule admitted to be perfect in all other Points, is however highly diſgraced, and rendred contemptible in this, by the Courſe that moſt of the Clergy have taken in our Days, to preſcribe other Rules and Precepts, whereby to judge and determine, touching the Spirit of Prophecy in general, as if thoſe in Scripture were deficient. For, as in the Third Part of this Treatiſe we were not Advocates for *Montanus*, or the reſt there named, further than they ought to have had Liberty of Propheſying in the Church, by the general Rules given in Scripture, by Divine Inſpiration; ſo neither, in this Part are we deſirous to apologize, for any particular Perſons whatſoever, but we deſire to have the Cauſe withdrawn, from ſpecial and perſonal Inſtances, and put upon a general Foot; that whenever the ſovereign Will of God ſhall be, to ſend Prophets, and to inſpire any one from above,

there

there may be due Honour paid, not to him, but to the Word of the Lord, abſtractedly conſider'd.

§ 2. This being the ultimate End, and only Scope of the preſent Treatiſe, I ſhould have been exceeding glad, to have had Occaſion to add here, that thoſe of the Clergy in my own Nation, and of the ſame common Faith and Hope in Religion, had ſhewn themſelves now in the Point of Prophecy, reformed in Principles, beyond and above the Time of *Conſtantine*. Now it will not be unſeaſonable to reflect, that throughout the whole Debate upon the *Montaniſts*, I have but ſlightly taken Notice of the Stile, which is frequent with the Author of their Hiſtory, in branding them with the Name of *Reformers*, and the Urgers of a *Reformation* in the Church; therefore the other Party are by him veſted with that, of the *Catholicks* and the Catholick Church, who pleaded that it belonged alone to them, to reform themſelves, and they objected to the Authority of the Prophetick Spirit to do it. I am not to meddle here with the Subjects of *Reformation*, which concern'd that Time; but whereas the Authority of the Prophetick Spirit in private Perſons after the Clergy in *Phrygia* had loſt it, was diſown'd; I cannot forbear to add, that the *Montaniſts* are injuriouſly dealt with to lie under a reproach with us now-a-days, for inſiſting upon ſuch a REFORMATION, as might have prevented any ſubſequent Occaſion, for the *Word* as uſed among us now; on the contrary they ought to be honour'd as the moſt primitive Reformers of the early Corruptions, Depravity, and growing Uſurpations, in the Chriſtian Church, who contended to preſerve all things in it, upon the Platform of the Apoſtles and Prophets. Having therefore barely mention'd the miſapplied Phraſe aboveſaid, we now proceed to examine, whether the Chriſtian Clergy of the Reformed Faith and Diſcipline, do ſtand at This Day more Scriptural in their Judgment of Prophecy, and leſs Guilty of teaching Human Doctrines, in Oppoſition to the Divine, than the Condemners of the *Montaniſts* did.

§ 3. We have obſerved in the Cloſe of the Second Part that the firſt Notice occurring to us from the Writings of the Antient Fathers, that all the miraculous Powers of the Holy Spirit were ceaſed in the Chriſtian Church, was between the Years 400 and 430: Whether the Gift of Prophecy was known in any Place to ſubſiſt at all, unto the end of that Time, we cannot tell; but ſince that Time we take it to be concluded univerſally, that nothing of it has

been

been openly in the Church acknowledg'd. Wherefore, during ſo long a Space, of the withdrawing or conceiv'd Abſence of the Spirit Prophetick, it is not to be wonder'd at, if there be numerous Traditional Opinions contracted and imbibed touching it, that upon Examination are found antiſcriptural; becauſe the Students in Divinity thro' Want of Occaſion calling them to it, by the Inſtances of any Perſons propheſying, or ſpeaking by the φανερωσις, or Manifeſtation of a Spirit according to the Analogy of Faith, even the ſacred Writings of the Old and New Teſtament; have taken for granted that the *Montaniſts* were juſtly condemn'd for propheſying by an evil Spirit, and ſo have not only built themſelves upon that Preſumption, but have added innumerable other Dogmaes, Axioms or Syſtems, touching the Spirit of Prophecy, ſuitable to the Schemes of human Wiſdom; without that careful proving of them by the Touchſtone of Scripture, which in other Points, that are controverted among themſelves, they are accuſtomed to uſe: For as to this Point, the Clergy have never ſuffer'd a Debate, what might be true Prophecy. And tho' theſe unwarrantable Opinions received by the Tradition of learned Writers, from one Age to another thro' a long Succeſſion, be very numerous; we know not however of any Communion of Proteſtants that have as ſuch inſerted among the Articles of their Faith a concluſive Sentence, on this Point of Divine Revelation and Propheſyings, except one. We ſhall begin therefore with that, and ſubjoin to it, as a Pattern of what might be more numerouſly exemplified, ſome Declarations ſeverally within a few Years, of ten or twelve Divines, who have publiſh'd Tracts, which are moſt of them Sermons for teaching the People upon the Subject before us. But becauſe I have ſignified my Deſire, to abſtract the Cauſe from the Entanglements of perſonal Debate, and put it entirely upon the Foot of a general Enquiry; I do beg leave, to omit the Names of theſe ſeveral Divines, who (I think) are all now living, and Perſons for the moſt of them, of no mean Characters for Piety, and Learning; who are not to be ſuppoſed to vent any thing inconſiderately from the Pulpit, and who have, in what I ſhall quote from them, ſpoken no other thing, than ſuch as is commonly receiv'd, maintain'd, and preach'd among their Brethren, and which they can doubtleſs juſtify by the Tradition of their Fathers. However, I ſeek no Evaſion by this Liberty of omitting to name them; for whenever I am call'd upon to do it publickly, I am ready

to

to produce from them the Vouchers, for every one of these Articles following.

DOCTRINE I.

A Confession of Faith, publish'd by the Assembly of Divines *Anno* 1650. after enumerating the several Books of the Old and New Testament, subjoins; *to which nothing at any time, is to be added, by New Revelations of the Spirit.*

Answer. Leaving it to be further explain'd, by the Advocates of this Confession of Faith; we can at present understand no less by it, than a plain Declaration, that there is to be no more Revelations of the Spirit, and in Consequence, every Spirit pretending to give forth Inspiration or Prophecy, must be Diabolical. Now because this Matter has already been and will be further explain'd necessarily, in treating upon some other Articles, we here think it sufficient to set in Opposition to it, That which does abundantly appear to be built upon much more Authority of the Scriptures, and therefore a full Answer, even the Church of *England*'s Prayer, on the Anniversary of *Barnabas* the Apostle; *O Lord God Almighty, who didst endue thy Holy Apostle* Barnabas *with singular* GIFTS *of the Holy Ghost; leave us not we beseech Thee, destitute of thy* MANIFOLD GIFTS, *nor yet of Grace to use them always to thy Honour and Glory through Jesus Christ our Lord.* In Confirmation of which *Prayer*, and to shew a great Concurrency of Private Opinions, in the same Communion, *that* which is annexed to the celebrated Book, *the whole Duty of Man*, may suffice; for there, in a Prayer for the Peace of the Church, we read, *When thou didst mount up to Heaven triumphantly, thou gavest Gifts unto Men, of thy Spirit; renew again from above, thy Old Bountifulness; give that thing to thy Church now fainting and growing downward, that thou gavest unto her shooting upward, at her first beginning. And because thy Spirit hath the Science of speaking, give to the Bishops the Gift of Prophecy, that they may declare and interpret Holy Scripture, not of their own Brain, but of thine inspiring. And thus the Old Dignity and Tranquillity of the Church, shall return again with a Godly Order, unto the Glory of thy Name.*

DOCTRINE II.

An Advocate of the Confession of Faith above mention'd, says; *Inspiration was given, but for a limited Time; the Apostles were the last Messengers of God to his Church;*

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it is now above Sixteen Hundred Years, ſince Inſpiration expir'd; nor can it be ever reſtored, becauſe of Rev. xxii. 19. *for whoever has* (or ſince had) *a New Revelation, not only adds* (or added) *to the Scriptures, but entirely ſecludes and ſuperſeeds* (or did ſo by) *them thereby; hence the* Montaniſts *were by ſome of the Fathers proved Impoſtors, in pretendsng to the Gift of Prophecy, for that it was then ceaſed in the Church; the New Teſtament being the laſt Volume of Divine Revelations compleated,* Rev. xxii. 19. *the Reaſon of Inſpiration ceaſed.*

Anſwer. Firſt, this here intimated is a Doctrine altogether Novel, that the Reaſon of Inſpiration at the *Pentecoſt* and afterwards was to write the Volume of the New Teſtament; when it is plain by our Saviour's Commiſſion, that He empower'd them to convert all Nations by preaching evangelically and not by Writing; and when we have not a Word therein Written by a Majority of the twelve, any more than of thoſe Numbers, on whom the Holy Ghoſt fell, and who indefatigably preach'd by Inſpiration every where; neither was there any Precept of our Lord to them, to write at all. But *Secondly*, the Volume of the New Teſtament was not compleated by the Book of St. *John*'s Revelation, that we know of upon any good Authority, the placing it laſt in our Bible, being meerly of Human Diſcretion. In Truth, by the beſt Accounts we have, this Book was written in the Iſle of *Patmos*, and the Goſpel of St. *John* was written after his Releaſe thence, which is notorious to them that are the moſt learned, as appears in Dr. *Mills*'s Preface to his *Greek* Teſtament. *Thirdly*, the Volume of the New Teſtament, as to the Number of Tracts now allowed to be included in it, was not at all concluded till about *Anno* 500. unto which Time, or the greateſt Part of it, the Epiſtles of *Clemens* and *Barnabas*, aud the Viſions of *Hermas* (as we have proved) were enrolled therein, and ſome Tracts included now in ours, were much controverted; all which may appear by numerous Evidences uncontrolable. *Fourthly*, the *Montaniſts* were not by any one of the Fathers before *Conſtantine*, ever taxed, much leſs proved for Impoſtors, upon this Foot aſſerted, that the Gift of Prophecy was then ceaſed in the Church; for demonſtrating whereof, I appeal to the Evidence alledged in the ſecond and third Part. *Fifthly*, whether Inſpiration was given for a limited Time, I leave to be judged of from the Authors own Words, thus; *they that ſay, the Spirit of Prophecy did not ceaſe, at the Deſtruction of* Jeruſalem,

(Anno

(Anno Chriſti, 74.) *or thereabouts, will not know where to limit it, and what that Age was, wherein it was extinguiſh'd; and if no Limits be put to it, then how great is the Danger we are in? And beſides, if no Period be fixed, then there were no Age, but there would be ſome Perſons, oracular as* Moſes: *And if there be any Limitation, then were is it fixed? Probably at the Fall of* Jeruſalem; *or probably it expired in Effect, in the Apoſtles Days, or ſoon after (probably.) Sixthly,* Thoſe that had Revelations and the Gift of Prophecy, did not ſeclude and ſuperſeed the Scriptures by them, but we have ſhewn already, that in Fact, the *Montaniſts* were the cloſeſt Adherers to them; and the Accuſers of theſe then did even acknowledge the ſame, as the principal Occaſion of *Montanus*'s Deluſion; inſomuch that one Item of Charge againſt the Prophets was then, that they would not ſuffer one Iota of the written Word to fall to the Ground. In like Manner we have argued in the whole of this preſent Treatiſe; and we wiſh that all others, would take Heed of ſecluding and ſuperſeeding the Scriptures, as the general Rule, to determine of Prophecy by, whether to be rejected or allowed. But upon this Occaſion, the Love of God and a Concern for his Glory, will not ſuffer us to paſs over ſo many Falſities poſitively affirmed, without pitying thoſe, who firſt affright themſelves with an imaginary Danger; and then to ſkreen themſelves from it, will purſue ſuch Meaſures, as do clearly betray, that they are far from a Love of Truth, and have Pleaſure in the contrary: Otherwiſe, what Account can be given, of heaping together ſo many arbitrary Aſſertions, as this Article ſets before us, without the alledging of any Authorities from *Antiquity*, concerning which the Affirmations hereof include ſeveral Points, of great Moment. But to proceed and enquire into what is built upon the above mention'd Foundations manifeſtly falſe.

DOCTRINE III.

Whoever has a New Revelation, not only adds to the Scriptures, but entirely ſecludes and ſuperſedes them thereby. To add any further Revelation to the New Teſtament, is to undermine it. And ſeeing that by Rev. xxii. 18. *He that addeth to the Scripture has Damnation denounced to him, therefore thoſe that break that Rule, by pretended Inſpiration, are to be judg'd for Impoſtors, Seducers, Emiſſaries of the Devil, commiſſion'd by the Father of Lies. But Inſpiration is therefore falſe, becauſe new, ſince the Apoſtolick Writings.*

Anſwer

Anſwer. Theſe being Rules equally valid in all Times, ſince the Death of St. *John*, we appeal to the primo-primitive Chriſtians, who had many Advantages above the modern Ages, to know the Will of God, deliver'd by the primary and chief Apoſtles, or as it was revealed to the holy Apoſtles and Prophets, by the Spirit, *Eph.* iii. 5. Let therefore thoſe Ages teſtify loudly againſt the Modern, by what we have made appear of them, ſaying, " We have " ſeen and heard thoſe very Apoſtles ye pretend to acknow- " ledge; they never taught us ſuch a Doctrine as this; " they, and in particular, St. *John* appointed ſuch to pre- " ſide over us, as were moſt diſtinguiſhed by the Gifts of " the Holy Ghoſt, who ſurvived Him, and we ſubmitted " gladly to ſuch Overſeers, who ſpake to us in the Name, " and by the Word of the Lord: Thus it is, that we have " been taught of God, by the Mouths of *Clement*, *Ignatius*, " *Polycarp*, *Barnabas*, and a thouſand other Prophets; and " yet the Prophetical and Apoſtolical Scriptures were ne- " ver ſecluded and ſuperſeeded, but read with Reverence " in our Aſſemblies. *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, " *Cyprian*, *Dyoniſius*, and many more, can proclaim in our " Behalf, that the paying due ſubmiſſive Reverence to the " Lord the Spirit, and the hearing Prophetick Sermons " dictated from on high, did well agree with owning the " Scriptures Apoſtolical, for the Standard of our Faith, " whilſt others, who oppoſed the Spirit in our Days, did " corrupt the Scriptures, and denied Part of them. Nay, " who but he that has the *Key of David*, who but he that " is gifted from above, with Wiſdom and Knowledge, who " but the Spirit of Prophecy, which knows the deep Things " of God, and dictated the Scriptures, can unfold to us " the very many obſcure and myſterious Parts of theſe ve- " ry Scriptures themſelves? It is not for Men of their " own Heads to do it, let them take heed how they pre- " ſume to invade the Office of the Holy Ghoſt, to teach " and lead us into all Truth, and to teſtify of Chriſt in " theſe Points; for no Prophecy of the Scripture is of any " private or human Interpretation. He on the contrary, " is an Interpreter one of a Thouſand, and has open'd to " us the Scriptures ſo as no Man ever could have done, and " when He ſpeaks by Inſpiration, there's nothing on Man's " Part added to the Scripture. We have left to all future " Generations, numerous Teſtimonies of his expounding the " Scriptures, to the full Satisfaction of the whole Church " in our Ages, who receiv'd thoſe Expoſitions, as uncon-

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" trollable by Man. We were ſo far from eſteeming the " Inſpir'd, neceſſarily falſe and Emiſſaries of the Devil, " becauſe ſucceeding the Generation of the Apoſtles, that " we believ'd *Prophecy* would be perpetual in the Chriſtian " Church, becauſe God had ſet therein Prophets as an Or- " der diſtinct; and becauſe we thought that the declared " Uſe thereof, for Edification and Comfort of the Church " could never ceaſe; and becauſe the Precepts and Promi- " ſes of the Spirit were without Limitation of Time. If " any Man therefore appear'd to be prophetical, or acted " by a Spirit, we tried that Spirit by 1 *Cor.* xiv. 37. and " other Scriptures, whether he acknowledg'd the Things " written by the Apoſtles, to be the Commandments of " the Lord; and when we had proved all Things of this " kind, by the Teſt and Standard of avowed Prophecy, " we adhered to, and approved that which was good by it. " We therefore for theſe Reaſons, proteſt openly againſt " your Principles, as anti-apoſtolical."

DOCTRINE IV.

The Word of God gives no Ground to think that God would do any thing of this kind, after the Death of the Apoſtles; we have warning of falſe Prophets *in the New Teſtament, but no Promiſe of any* true Ones.

Anſwer. Jeſus *being a Prieſt after the Order of Melchiſedeck,* Heb. viii. 6. *is the Mediatour of a better Covenant, which was eſtabliſhed upon better Promiſes, even of the Spirit*; for, the Goſpel is called by Way of Supereminence above the Law, the Miniſtration of the Spirit, inſomuch that Chriſt is ſaid to be juſtify'd by the Spirit, when his Followers or Believers, every where, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. whether *Jew or Gentile, were made to drink into one Spirit, for by one Spirit they were all baptized into one Body*; *but if the Fall and diminiſhing of the Jews was then the Riches of the Gentiles, how much more ſhall their Fulneſs be ſo?* Rom. xi. 12. *What ſhall the receiving of them be but Life from the dead?* Theſe Things we ought further to conſider, leſt that by admitting of ſtrange Doctrine, the Church of Chriſtians ſhould appear leſs favour'd of God, than that of the *Jews*, which was bleſſed 1500 Years with the Grace of Prophecy, and that it might be alſo after *Malachi*, is not improbable; for this would be the Reverſe of the Apoſtle's noble Reflection upon the Subject, O *the Depth of the Riches both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his Judgment, and his Ways paſt finding out! for who hath known the Mind of the Lord, or*

who

who hath been his Counſellor? Inſtead therefore, of allowing this Doctrine, which is ſo diminiſhing of the Honour of our Immortal Prophet and *Melchiſedical* High-Prieſt, let us rather recollect what is ſtill to come, as well as what was his Glory in the Church of the firſt Ages, in Chriſt; and in particular, that in the primitive Times, it was the Sentiment univerſal of Chriſtians, that the Gift of Prophecy ſhould never ceaſe in the Church; inſomuch that tho' *Apollinaris* condemn'd and excommunicated *Montanus* in his Dioceſs or Pariſh, yet it may ſeen in *Euſebius*, that the ſame *Apollinaris* mentions it as a Doctrine of the Apoſtles, that the Grace of Prophecy ſhould never ceaſe in the Church general. The modern Divines therefore, aſſerting, that *the Word of God gives no Ground to think, that God would ever beſtow the Gifts extraordinary of the Spirit, after the Days of the Apoſtles*, well deſerves to be examined, becauſe it appears to be the clear Reverſe of the Opinion univerſal of the Church, while ſhe anſwer'd to the Figure of *a Woman clothed with the Sun, and having the Moon under her Feet.*

Wherefore, let us recollect, *Firſt*, what Promiſes in the Old Teſtament, are made over unto the Chriſtian Church in the New; and herein we find upon the firſt opening of the *Pentecoſt* Commiſſion, *Peter* ſaying to the *Jews*, Acts ii. 38, 39. *Repent and be baptized every one of you, and ye ſhall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt; for the Promiſe of it is unto you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off*, (the Gentiles,) *even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* In Search after the Promiſe therefore referr'd to by St. *Peter*, we find in *Iſa.* lix. 21. *This is my Covenant with Jacob, ſaith the Lord; my Spirit which is upon thee, and my Words which I have put in thy Mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seeds Seed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. Neither will I hide my Face any more from them, for I have poured out my Spirit upon the Houſe of Iſrael, ſaith the Lord*, Ezek. xxxix. 29. Our Saviour calls the Holy Spirit, *Luke* xxiv. 49. *The Promiſe of the Father*; and St. *Paul* mentions it, the Bleſſing of *Abraham* come upon the *Gentiles*, by Promiſe, *Gal.* iii. 14. So that whatever Promiſes of that kind were given of old to the *Jews*, they are devolved upon Chriſtians, as the Seed of *Abraham*, by Faith. As to the pouring out of the Spirit prophetically upon the *Jews*, in ſome Age ſtill to come, there would not want, if we ſought for them, ſeveral Modern Divines to vouch for it from theſe and other Texts; but that alone of Dr. *Scott's Chriſtian Life*, p. 1167. ſhall here ſuffice; "God will all on

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" a ſudden, and in a moſt ſurprizing Manner, *Iſa.* lxvi. 8 " *Zech.* iii. 9. open the Eyes of this blinded Nation, by a " wonderful Effuſion of his holy Spirit upon them, ſuch as " that was on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, tho' far more exten- " ſive, *Ezek.* xxxix. 28, 29. *Iſa.* xxxii. 13, 14, 15. *Iſa.* lix. " 20, 21. compared with *Rom.* xi. 25, 26. *I would not Bre-* " *thren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this Myſtery* (if we will " however, we may) *that Blindneſs in Part is happed to If-* " *rael,* ἀχρις ὁ, *till when the Fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in,* " *that is, about that Time when the Converſion of the Gentiles* " *ſhall be compleated.*" Now the pouring out from Heaven of the Spirit of Prophecy, ſeems in that Text applied, as well to the compleating of the Converſion of all the *Gentile* Nations firſt by it, as to the ſaving of all *Iſrael*; but if the *Jews* did receive alone that Effuſion of the Spirit (which is very hard to allow, and is not contained in the Text) they would be however one Church with us, and we ſhould partake the Benefit; which does ſufficiently overthrow the dogmatizing of this Article. But becauſe we have ſufficient Reaſon to inſiſt, that Chriſtians now are Children of the Covenant, and Heirs of theſe Promiſes, made over to the Chriſtian Church; we inſtance particularly further, in that of *Pſal.* lxxii. 6. *He ſhall come down like Rain upon the mown Graſs, as Showers that water the Earth*; and in that of *Jer.* xxxi. 34. *They ſhall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother; for they ſhall all know me from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt of them ſaith the Lord,* which is in *Heb.* viii. recited at large, and diſtinguiſhed from the former Covenant which was broken, and given as a New Covenant, wherein God would no more remember their Iniquities, ſome of which Promiſes are expreſs for the never ceaſing Bleſſing of the Holy Spirit, to be poured out, and are a direct Confutation to the aboveſaid modern Doctrine of our Divines, that the Word of God gives no Ground to think, *&c.*

Secondly, That the Word of God does give ſome Ground to think, that He would beſtow the Spirit of Prophecy ſome longer Time than the Days of the Apoſtles, appears further, by the Prayer of St. *Paul*, in the latter End of his Days, that God would give the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation unto the *Epheſians*, *Chap.* i. 17. nay, even the uſual Apoſtolick Prayer, *The Grace of our Lord Jeſus, and the Fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt be with you all*; being a benedictory Salutation to Churches, was ſo underſtood by *thoſe* neareſt to the Apoſtles, that they meant thereby an Encreaſe, or at leaſt, Continuance of the Propherick Gifts; which Sa-

lutation was in that very Verſe, uſed afterwards by the Churches one to another. Thus alſo, when the Apoſtle, *Eph.* iii. 19, 21. prays that they might be *filled with all the fulneſs of God*, it is evident that the Communion of the Spirit in the higheſt degree muſt be included; and if ſo, he is ſo far from limiting that Petition to any Time, that he adds, *unto God be Glory in the Church, throughout all Ages, World without end*, Amen. But as if the Spirit foreſaw ſuch a narrowneſs, or ſelfiſhneſs in Men of latter Ages to come, to limit the Fulneſs of the Bleſſing of the Goſpel of Chriſt, ſo as to exclude the extenſiveneſs of the Words; therefore he tells us, in the ſame Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, Chap. iv. 11-13. That he gave *ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt, TILL we all come into the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man*, (that is,) *unto the meaſure of THE AGE OF THE FULNESS of Chriſt*. Now, the Age of the Fulneſs of Chriſt, is, by the ſame Apoſtle, in *Rom.* xi. ſet forth to us, to be *the ſaving of all* Iſrael, *WHEN the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in, as it is written* Iſa. lix. 20, 21. *Jer.* xxxi. and other Places; to which the Apoſtle refers in that Place, as they are already cited in the former Paragraph. In reference therefore to this great Promiſe of the Father, the Spirit to be diffuſed, the ſame Apoſtle ſays again, to the *Epheſians*, Chap. i. 11--14, *In Chriſt alſo we have obtained an Inheritance, that we who firſt truſted in Chriſt, ſhould be to the praiſe of his Glory; in whom alſo, after that ye believ'd, ye were ſealed with that Holy Spirit of Promiſe, which is the EARNEST of our Inheritance, UNTIL the Redemption of the purchaſed Poſſeſſion, to the* (greater) *praiſe of his Glory*. So that the Apoſtolick Age receiving the Earneſt of the Promiſes of God, which are our Inheritance, it was a Pledge to aſſure the whole; and they having the firſt Fruits of the Spirit, they *waited for* the full Adoption to come, the Redemption of the Body, the Perfect Man, the Meaſure of the Age of the Fulneſs of Chriſt; as every Creature, with earneſt Expectation, *waited for the Manifeſtation of the Sons of God*, Rom. viii.

But, *Thirdly*, this Doctrine, That the Word of God gives no ground to think that God would do any thing of this kind after the Death of the Apoſtles, ſeems to be directly oppoſite to the Angel's ſaying to *John*, *Rev.* x. 11. *Thou muſt Propheſy again before many Peoples, and Nations, and Tongues,*

Tongues, and Kings; for as we are informed from Chronologists of that time, that St. *John* lived but a Year or two after it, and was so far from performing the same, that he conversed only with the Churches of *Asia* already planted; so the Commentators on this Text interpret it, that *John* in that Vision represented other Prophets, who should be sent forth by the Lord of the Harvest, towards the time of the Destruction of Antichrist; which also seems to be promised in 2 *Thes.* ii. 8. since that *Wicked* shall be destroyed, or consumed, with the Spirit of the Lord's Mouth, and the Brightness of *his Presence*, παρουσιας. But long before this Period, even when the Woman was fled into the Wilderness (which I suppose is applied to the Fourth or the Fifth Century) the Dragon went to make War with the Remnant of her Seed, *which have the Testimony of Jesus*; an Expression that in its plainest Sense means, Persons having the Spirit of Prophecy, throughout the Scripture. Again, just before the Desolation of the Mother of Harlots, there is an Angel entrusted to preach the everlasting Gospel to every Nation upon Earth, *Rev.* xiv. 6. which surely bespeaks more than the customary Preaching of Men, and doubtless Prophecy. *Lastly*, the Apostatized Estate of the Christian Church, denominated by *Babylon the Great*, cannot be imagined to have taken Place during the very Lives of the Apostles; yet in the Time of her Usurpation and inebriating the Nations with her Abominations, it is positively asserted there was Prophets; *for, she was drunken with the Blood of the Witnesses of Jesus, and in her was found the Blood of Prophets*, Rev. xviii. 24. xvii. 6. nay, certainly between the Age of the Apostles and that of the Man of Sin (grown up) are we to understand the Prophesying of *Antipas*, the slain Witness of Jesus, *Chap.* ii. 13.

Fourthly, That the primitive Ages of Christ, were much better founded on the Apostles and Prophets, (Jesus Himself being the Corner Stone) when they trusted that the Grace of Prophecy should be perpetual in the Church, than our Divines are in the Doctrine, that there is no Ground to think, that God would ever do any Thing of this Kind, after the Death of St. *John*, the Lord's Prayer it self does sufficiently declare. For, when ever there is a Command to Pray for the Spirit, our bounteous God does not in all the Record of his Word, limit his Graciousness either to Time or Manner, wherein He will hear our Request by Faith; 'tis only the Spirit of Man lusting to Envy that does impose the Restraint either to our Faith in Prayer, or the Divine Propitiousness to hear, saying, *the Spirit of*

the Lord is ſhortned, Mic. ii. 7. Thus for Inſtance, when our Saviour taught us daily to ſupplicate for επιουσιον, *Super-ſubſtantial Bread*; the primitive Chriſtians univerſally, even the *Grecians* themſelves, who muſt needs underſtand the Term better than we, did conſtrue that to be a Supplication for the Spirit, which the proper Father of Chriſtians is as ready to give to his genuine Children, as He does plenteouſly *the material* to his Enemies. *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*'s Explanation of that Clauſe, with that of many others, do ſhew us the ſaid Senſe of it to be univerſally receiv'd; and our Lord's ſubſequent Encouragement, that the Father of Fathers will not give a Devil, to a Child petitioning for the good Spirit, does aſſure us the ſame. But again, we find in Dr. *Mill*'s *Preface*, p. 77. and on the Text of *Luke* xi. 2. that in the Second and Third, and Fourth Centuries, (in the Place of *thy Kingdom come*, in *Matthew*) there was *thy Holy Spirit come upon us*, which ſeems further to explain the Petition of *daily Bread*, and that alſo for the further Manifeſtation of the Kingdom of God; and this latter Text of *Luke* was read ſo, before the Time of *Tertullian*, which is the more conſiderable, becauſe That Father aſſures us, that the very Writings themſelves of the Apoſtles remained unto his Time, to be ſearched.

Fifthly, As every Injunction of ſeeking a Thing from God, implies a Promiſe precedent; the primitive Chriſtians were clearly founded upon the Apoſtles, in expecting that the Grace of Prophecy would be perpetual in the Church: For in 1 *Cor.* xii. 31. xiv. 1, 12. We have a Command, *to covet earneſtly the beſt Gifts, and deſire Spiritual Gifts, but* (among them) *rather that of propheſying, and to be zealous of Spirits, ſeeking to excell to the edifying of the Church*. Anſwerable to which general Injunctions, without the leaſt Shadow of a Limitation of Time for theſe Petitions, it appears in Dr. *Mills*, that ſome Copies of the ſacred Text, had that of *Gal.* iv. 18. *Zealouſly do ye affect the more excellent Gifts, for it is good to be zealouſly affected always in a good Thing*. In like manner, does our Lord Himſelf require from us the Prayer of Faith in this Point, *John* vii. 37, 39. *In the laſt Day, that great Day of the Feaſt, Jeſus ſtood and cried, ſaying, if any Man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink: He that believeth on me*, (the Giver) *out of his Belly ſhall flow Rivers of living Water*, that is, the Holy Ghoſt given. On the other Side, we are warned againſt faltering in this Faith, in the Third and Fourth Chapters to the *Hebrews*, by the Example of the unbelieving *Iſraelites*, and

Chap.

Chap. iii. 14. *For we are made Partakers of Chriſt, if we hold the Beginning of our Confidence ſtedfaſt unto the End, while it is ſaid, to Day if ye will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts.*

Sixthly, The primitive Chriſtians thought that none could edify the Church ſatisfactorily, by interpreting the Scriptures, but the Inſpir'd Teacher: Moreover they pleaded, that as there was one Body, ſo neceſſarily there muſt be one Spirit informing that Body, to conſtitute a Church Apoſtolical; for Chriſtians united are a ſpiritual Houſe, growing into a Temple, fitly framed together by a Diverſity of the Spirit's Operations, called an Habitation of God thro' the Spirit, *Eph.* ii. 19, 22. They underſtood the Warnings given by our Saviour, of *falſe Prophets*, imply'd, He would not leave them comfortleſs, without the Spirit extraordinary to diſcern them, but that He would be with them as a ruling Head in that Caſe; but ſaid they, there muſt be true Prophets, otherwiſe the Cautions touching falſe Ones would be needleſs; for we are warned only, *not to believe every Spirit.* But if He will ſend us none, why are we to *try the Spirits, whether they be of God*; which ſhews they may be ſo? What Need have we, to *prove all Things*, when nothing of this kind can be good, which we are bid to hold faſt? The Reward promiſed to thoſe who receive a Prophet, makes us unwilling to loſe it; and why are we to ſubmit our ſelves to ſuch, whom the Holy Ghoſt makes our Overſeers, if there can be no ſuch Thing? We can never ſuppoſe, that theſe Canons are made to ſerve for nothing, any more than thoſe touching the Manner of Prophets ſpeaking in Aſſemblies, or Women propheſying there: If indeed, we ſhould be ſo ungrateful and rebellious, as not to receive thoſe whom Chriſt ſhall ſend, we ſhould reject Him, and then we might juſtly expect, that He would give us up to Blindneſs, and Hardneſs of Heart. But if the Apoſtles and Multitudes more receiv'd the Spirit, becauſe they firſt truſted in Chriſt, we will not tempt Him to withdraw from us, by doing Deſpite to the Spirit, or by grieving or vexing Him, by any vilifyings of Prophecy, or quenching of our Comforter; but on the contrary, *Pray unto the Lord of the Harveſt daily to ſend forth* Prophetical *Labourers into his Harveſt,* Mat. ix. 38.

DOCTRINE V.

There is no need of Prophets.

Anſwer. Our great Prophet and ſole Maſter in Teaching, ſaid to the *Scribes, Mat.* xv. 7-9. *Ye Hypocrites, well did*

Esaias *Prophesie of you, saying, This People draweth nigh unto me with their Mouth, and honoureth me with their Lips, but their Heart is FAR from me; but in vain they do worship me, teaching* for Doctrines *the Commandments of Men.* Why the distinguished Words are put in a different Character in our *English*, I know not, seeing that the *Greek* has them; but being by this Text, referr'd by our Saviour to *Isaiah* xxix. 9. we find there in the *Hebrew*, *Stay yourselves and wonder, they are blind, and blind others.* Our Lord often says, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*; but then He tells us the Reason of that Call to the People, *Mat.* xiii. 15. *For this People's Heart is waxed gross* (generally) *and their Ears are dull of hearing, and their Eyes they have closed.* In like manner, the same Prophetick Summons occurs in the *Revelations*, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.* And whilst there was any Disposition in the Churches of Christ to hear the sound of that Trumpet, this Doctrine of the needlesness of Prophecy was never heard of, as has appear'd in the Second Part: So likewise whilst there was any regard to the Scriptures on this point, it was Uncontroverted, That he that Prophesied, edify'd the Church: And when St. *Paul* supposes, that the more noble Parts of the Mystical Body, might possibly say to the less noble, *we have no need of ye*, it is not there imagined possible for Christians indeed, ever to be so foolishly presumptious, as to say, That the Prophets, who are constituted and set in the Church, Seconds to the Apostles, should be needless. But as to the many Uses that Prophecy was of in the Churches of Christ, I have at large express'd them in the Second Part hereof, and shall not here recollect them, but refer somewhat of that kind to another Place. I am perswaded, that the *Jewish* Priesthood were very jealous of admitting, That there was so much as One Pin of the Tabernacle Useless, which was of Divine Appointment; 'tis strange therefore, that one of the most noble constituent Parts of the Christian Church and Temple, should be so rashly now judged Useless. I am perswaded also, that the Modern Preachers of this Doctrine, would not now allow, that a like Plea was valid, in the Mouth of the *Jewish* Levites, against the word of the Lord spoken then by the Prophet; altho' it appears by *Lev.* x. 11. *Mal.* ii. 7. that the Levitical Priesthood were empower'd to teach the People; and it further appears, that they did it unblameably, by 2 *Chron.* xxx. 22. and *Neh.* viii. 7, 8. Moreover, this Preaching and Instruction of theirs continued in our Saviour's time, so commendably perform'd, that

our Lord directs his Disciples to Practise what they Taught. How then comes it to be more unnecessary under the Christian Dispensation than that of the Law, that Men should have the Scriptures open'd, and be taught to know rightly, the Divine Laws, by the Spirit of Prophecy? Surely, when our Lord said, that *if Sinners would not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither would they be converted tho' one rose from the Dead*, never intended to absolve the *Jews* from hearing Himself, and the Apostles, and Prophets, He should send to them afterwards. Our Divines also will easily allow, and do in their Writings, That on many other Accounts besides this of Teaching, and opening the Scripture, God did *then* graciously speak to his People, by several Forewarnings, Consolatory Promises under Affliction, Reproofs of various kinds to the Clergy and People, and necessary Directions in Times of Exigence. How is it therefore, that under the Profession of Christianity, there can be no need at all, for the same Spirit of Christ which spake in the *Jewish* Prophets, ever to do so again? What if some of the Gospel Ministers should become as profane as the *Sadducees*, and others as hypocritical as the *Pharisees*, and the People notwithstanding all their Preaching, run Universally into the Luxury and Wantonness of *Sodom*, can there be no need; no, not from the Bowels of Infinite Mercy it self, for any Prophets? It is possible that the Levitical Priesthood might plead, that there was then no more Need of Prophets, than the Christian Teachers do now; they might say, *the Law of the Lord is already perfect*, and it appears they did say, *the Law shall not perish from the Priests* (who teach it,) *but the Prophets shall become Wind*; they might say, There is no Ground to think God will send any; for we read in *Deut.* xii. 32. *thou shalt not add* to the Word of God; they might say possibly, within themselves, The Lord knoweth it will be in vain to send Prophets to us, for the Vision of all Prophecy is a Letter Sealed which we cannot read, and which we do secretly resolve to oppose; they might say, We cannot believe God should send *Isaiah* purposely to harden us, as his Words seem to import. But in all these Cases, and Forty more; who is to be Judge of the Need there may be of Prophetick Messingers, the All-wise God, or Perverse Men?

DOCTRINE VI.

If we attend not to the Scripture, neither would we be prevailed on, by never ſo many Prophets, ſent among us; we may reſt ſatisfied then, that Almighty God will not ſend them, where He foreſees, 'tis likely to turn to no better account.

Anſwer. We ſee here, what a ſtrange Infatuation of Dogmatizing, or framing of Syſtems againſt the Lord, the Spirit, is got among the Learned; for on the one ſide, what Man can ſay, that we ſhould not at all be prevailed on, Edified, Exhorted and Comforted, as well as the Primitive Church, by the Spirit of Prophecy, who were far more illuſtrious in their Lives, than has been ever without it? The Wind bloweth where, and when it liſteth, and ſo doth the Holy Spirit the Comforter, whereof we find a bright ſhining Inſtance, in the numerous Converſions wrought by the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles, and by ſucceeding Prophets, in the firſt planting of Churches, and their Propagation after them. But, on the other ſide, ſuppoſing that Prophecy would from the Infidelity of Men, prove, in great Meaſure uſeleſs, to the Ends abovemention'd, in ſuch an Age as ours, what meaneth this preſumptious Reflection, upon the Council and Unerring Wiſdom of God, in ſending any Meſſengers to us? For, it does not at all appear inconſiſtent with the Will of God at any Time to ſend Prophets, that ſhall be rejected; nay, on the contrary, we have in Holy Writ, more Evidences of their being ſo, than otherwiſe; for, *Who hath believ'd our report*, ſaith *Iſaiah*? *Unto whom ſhall I ſpeak*, ſaith *Jeremiah*? Nay, moſt of the reſt, are full of ſuch like Teſtifyings againſt the People of *Iſrael*; and ſince that People are charged with the Blood of all the Prophets, it is from thence evident, that their Propheſying did not prevail. Nevertheleſs, tho' God certainly foreſaw the ſame would turn to no better Account, yet He always ſent even *them*, who were ſo rejected. And this is ſo plain, one would wonder how it is, that Preachers of the Goſpel, could overlook the Complaints to the ſame Purpoſe, in *Mat.* xiii. 14, 15. *Mark* iv. 12. *Luke* viii. 10. *John* xii. 40. *Acts* xxviii. 26. *Rom.* xi. 8. where the Fruitleſneſs of the Prophetick Word in the Apoſtles and our Lord, is liken'd to the Commiſſion of *Iſaiah*, *Go, tell this People, Hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; ſee ye indeed but perceive not; make the Heart of this People fat, make their Ears heavy, and ſhut up their Eyes.* Wherefore, ſince our very Proteſtant Divines, will needs make themſelves Judges of the Ways of God reveal-

revealing, in Oppoſition to the ſo frequent Declarations of the Sacred Scripture, I wiſh it may not be their Portion alſo, in this matter, that the Lord hath poured out upon them the Spirit of deep Sleep, and hath cloſed their Eyes, that *the Viſion* of all the Prophets (or the Commiſſion of God, in revealing Himſelf to them) is become unto theſe, as a Letter Sealed, *Iſaiah* xxix. 10, 11.

DOCTRINE VII.

No Propheteſs can be Authorized under the Goſpel; for it is commanded as a ſtanding Canon concerning Women, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. *That they ſhould keep ſilence in the Churches, and not be ſuffer'd to ſpeak there.*

Anſwer. The Learned *Grotius* notes upon the Text, *That it is to be underſtood with an exception of the Prophetick Afflatus or Inſpiration, which is a ſpecial Command of God, for them to ſpeak; for, ſays he, on* 1 Cor. xi. 5. *as in the* Old Teſtament *there were Propheteſſes, as* Miriam, Deborah, *the Wife of* Iſaiah, Huldah; *ſo in the* New, *there was the Daughters of* Philip, *and others afterwards: Women then who were ſuch, were wont to utter their Propheſyings even in Publick.* Unto which Explanation of the Caſe by *Grotius*, let us add, That the Reaſon annex'd to that Apoſtolick Command, is, becauſe Women are to be under Obedience to their Husbands, and therefore to be in Silence, as it ſtands in Oppoſition to the Uſurping Authority over the Man, by Publick teaching, 1 *Tim.* ii. 12. This therefore plainly refers to Women that are not Propheteſſes; but as there is neither Male nor Female, in the Caſe of the Spirit ſpeaking, ſo there is a poſitive Injunction touching every Woman that propheſyeth in Publick Aſſemblies, 1 *Cor.* xi. 5. wherein it is not poſſible, that the Apoſtle ſhould in the ſame Epiſtle contradict himſelf, or at all indeed ſpeak inconſiſtently with other Places, under the Spirit; for, *Rom.* xvi. 1. he ſtiles *Phœbe* (διακονος,) *a Miniſter of the Church which is at* Cenchrea, the Word in *Greek* being the very ſame, which is every where, when applied unto Men Preachers, rendred a Miniſter. Again in the Third Verſe, *Priſcilla* is called the *Fellow-labourer* (συεργος, Colleague) *of the Apoſtle in Chriſt Jeſus*, a Title as honourable and ſignificant, as is given to any Man. In like manner, Verſe 12. *Tryphena* and *Tryphoſa* (Two Women,) *Laboured in the Lord*, which plainly does deſcribe their Work: Wherefore, *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, *Strom.* lib. iii. p. 448. upon 1 *Cor.* ix. 5. *Have we not Power to lead about a Siſter, a Woman,* γυναικα, *as well as*

other

other Apoſtles ſays; The Apoſtles carried with them Women, not becauſe Wives, but as Siſters, that were Fellow-labourers in the Miniſtry of Preaching. And thus Dr. *Mills* on 1 *Pet.* v. 13. ſays, It was not a Church, but *an Elect Woman at Babylon*, Saluted. Concurrently with theſe Texts, it appears that Women were Authorized under the Goſpel to Propheſy, not only by the Inſtances of *Anna*, *Elizabeth*, *Mary*, and the Four Daughters of *Philip*, *Acts* xxi. 9; but becauſe, at the great Effuſion of *Pentecoſt*, we read of *Mary* and other Women in the number (ὀχλος the Crowd) of the One Hundred and Twenty Diſciples, who ſeem to be the ſame that *were all* (undiſtinguiſhed from the Men) *filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*; and that this was ſo, appears in its being a Fulfilment of that in *Joel*, *Your Daughters ſhall Propheſy, and on my Handmaidens I will pour out of my Spirit, and they ſhall Propheſy*, which alſo plainly aſſerts their Publick Propheſying. Thus again at *Samaria*, *after that they Believ'd and were Baptized, both Men and Women*, Acts viii. 12, 15, 17. *the Apoſtles prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghoſt*, and then laid their Hands on them; and they, the Women as well as Men (for any thing that appears) did receive it. In Conſequence of theſe Things, we have in the Second Part, cited from *Euſebius*, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, and *Tertullian*, ſeveral Inſtances of Women Propheſying, acknowledged there by the Biſhop of *Lincoln*, Mr. *Dodwell*, Dr. *Hicks* in the Perſon of *Amia*, and others; upon all which, we cannot but take notice, with how little Juſtice Modern Divines do upbraid Enthuſiaſts for invalidating the Scriptures, whilſt they themſelves continually advance Doctrines quite oppoſite to the Contents thereof.

DOCTRINE VIII.

The Propheſying of Little, or Young Children, is a reaſonable Ground of Suſpicion, that the Spirit ſo influencing, is an Evil, Deluding, Satanical One; ſeeing we never read, that God at any time revealed Himſelf to any ſuch.

Anſwer. The Prophecy of *Joel*, quoted at *Pentecoſt*, ſeems to imply Children, by the Diſtinction therein of Sons and Daughters, from Young Men and Old Men; and this is certain, that *Beza*'s Copy of the *New Teſtament* at *Cambridge*, reads that of *Acts* i. 14. touching the Aſſembly of Diſciples, on whom the Holy Ghoſt afterwards fell, *theſe all continued with one accord in Prayer and Supplication, with the Women and Children*; which, tho' we ſhould poſitively con-

conclude it were not Originally Scripture; yet ſo Antient a Copy, as by ſome is judged the moſt Antient we have, diſcovers plainly, that many have admitted it to be ſo; and that in conſequence, the Inſpiration of Children was not doubted by them. In the primitive Times, Mr. *Dodwell* ſays, that Children did ſometimes ſpeak by Publick Prophecy. We have alſo in the Sixteenth Epiſtle of *Cyprian*, a very expreſs mention of the like in his Days, for which he was unreproved by the Church of that Age; his Words are; *Both by Night and Day, God doth continually admoniſh and rebuke us; for, beſides Night Viſions, even by Day, Children among us of an Infant Age, do in Exſtacy, See, Hear, and Speak, being filled with the Holy Spirit, ſuch things as the Lord condeſcends to warn and inſtruct us by.* The Hiſtorian *Joſephus*, tells us, That *Samuel* was indeed full Twelve Years of Age when he began to Propheſy, and receiv'd Revelations from God, 1 *Sam.* iii. 4. But the Scripture is very little accurate in recording of Ages: Wherefore we cannot be poſitive what Age the Spirit was at any time limited to: In particular, touching *Sampſon*, when the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times, it is only affirmed, that *the Child grew*. Nevertheleſs, thoſe that go a great Way to fill up the Character of Men in *Iſaiah*, to whom the Prophet ſays there, *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his Counſellor hath taught him?* are deſired to read again, *Luke* i. 41. where *Elizabeth* being fill'd with the Holy Ghoſt, the Babe leaped in her Womb, agreeably to the Words of the Angel, *Verſe* 15. (which in the *Goth. Syr. Copt. Arab. Perſ.* and Origin Teſtaments, are,) *He ſhall be filled with the Holy Ghoſt, IN his Mother's Womb*: Therefore the very Objectors to the Inſpiration of Children, may read among the Learned of their Brethren, That the Child's leaping in the Womb is conſtrued ſo Miraculous, as to amount to Propheſying, or ſpeaking by Signs. However, according to the *Engliſh*, *He ſhall be filled with the Holy Ghoſt, even from his Mother's Womb*, means doubtleſs to propheſy as ſoon as he was Born; and it is not very clear but he did ſo on the Day of his Circumciſion, the opening of his Mouth ſeeming rather to refer to him than his Father, *Verſe* 64. to 66. We believe juſtly, (however the other be,) that our Lord Himſelf was filled with the Holy Ghoſt from his Birth; and the ſame thing which is affirmed of Him, *Luke* ii. 40. *the Child grew and waxed ſtrong in Spirit*, is in the ſame Words affirmed alſo of *John Baptiſt*. Chap. i. 80. Wherefore, we are aſtoniſhed to find, that the very Students in Divinity, aſſert in this

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Doctrinal Article, That they never read, either in Scripture or elſewhere, that God at any Time revealed Himſelf to any Children; conſidering too, that of *Mat.* xxi. 15, 16. for there, when the Chief Prieſts and Scribes ſaw the Children crying in the Temple, *Hoſannah* to the Son of *David*, our Saviour's Anſwer clearly and emphatically ſhews, they were acted from above therein; for, ſays He, *Have ye never read*, (ſtrange therefore that the Chriſtian Scribes have not,) *out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings*, (which were ſurely little Children,) *thou haſt perfected Praiſe?* Furthermore, when our ſole Maſter Prophetical ſays to his Diſciples, *Suffer little Children to come unto me; for of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven*; and when we read alſo that He laid his Hands upon them, we cannot be well aſſured, but that they might receive thereby ſome Tokens of his Heavenly Power: But if this latter Declaration of *Emanuel*, be conſtrued to relate only to Perſons Childlike in Humility, and Teachable, we may uſefully apply to our ſelves, that in *Iſaiah* xxviii. 9-13. where the Word of the Lord was ſuch an Offence, that ſome Perſons offended by it, went backward, and fell, and were broken, and ſnared, and taken; and thereupon the Expoſtulation occurs proper to the Teachers of Philoſophy now-a-days, rather than of Scripture; *Whom ſhall He teach Knowledge? And whom ſhall He make to underſtand the Hearing* of the Prophet? Them that are weaned from the Milk, and drawn from the Breaſts.

DOCTRINE IX.

It is beneath a good Angel to ſpeak a Verſe out of an Heathen Poet.

Anſwer. If ſo, it is doubtleſs alſo beneath the Spirit inſpiring; but the Learned tell us, as an Honour done to Human Literature, that St. *Paul* quotes a Paſſage out of *Aratus*, *Acts* xvii. 28. And another out of *Menander*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 33. And a third alſo out of *Epimenides*, *Tit.* i. 12. Now as all theſe were Heathen Poets, we are not ſure, but the ſame Spirit may alſo do the like again.

DOCTRINE X.

To uſe Invectives againſt the Clergy, effectually proves a Man, not to have the Divine Spirit.

Anſwer. We are ſure, that moſt of the Scripture Prophets, by the Divine Influence upon them did ſo; and not only thoſe in the Old Teſtament, but thoſe in the New, as *John Baptiſt*, *Stephen*, and even our Divine Maſter

ſter Himſelf, could not have been juſtify'd, owned or receiv'd, if the Doctrine of this Article be granted. If the Chriſtian Church had preſerved any Records, of their Prophets, and the Inſpirations by them, upon the falling away and Revolt, or gradual Apoſtacy thereof; we might have had Preſidents alſo from theſe, of a like Sort, as St. *Cyprian* hints in the Reports given by the Children in Extacy, and touching the five apoſtatizing Miniſters; and as to thoſe, whom *Irenæus* mentions to be violently bent, to drive the Grace of Prophecy out of the Church, had we any Records of what the Spirit then ſpake, we might have found ſome Invectives probably in them, againſt the Clergy. We find alſo, that *Antipas*, *Rev.* ii. 13. is by the *Greek*, expreſſive of one that withſtood the Pope, who is called by our Saviour, nevertheleſs *his faithful Witneſs*. Wherefore as to that ſort of Prophets, of whom the Lord by *Jeremiah* ſpeaks, that *the Prieſts bore Rule by their Means*, we leave them to the Times of Antichriſt's Dominions, to allow them on that Account. But as the Subject of reproving the Chriſtian Miniſtry, has been more at large debated in the Third Part; we ſhall add nothing on that Head here, but a ſincere Deſire, that all Chriſtian Teachers may be (according to the Apoſtolick Canons) blameleſs, as the Stewards of God's Word, ſound in Doctrine, unreprovable in Life, holding faſt the faithful Word written, and not partial in diſpenſing it, much leſs oppoſing it by any Dogmaes or Doctrines of their own; eſpecially in that Point of true Love and Reverence, due thereby to the Spirit of Prophecy. But more particularly and above all, we hope and pray that they may ceaſe from ſtrengthning the Infidelity of thoſe, who deny all Revelation; and who among other Arguments againſt that of the Scripture, are repreſented by Dr. *Nicholls* to uſe this "(*Conf.* with a *Deiſt*, "Part iii. *p.* 135.) to be in a Paſſion and call Men hard "Names, as Hypocrites, Generation of Vipers, and the "like (as *John Baptiſt* and others did to the Prieſts) and "liberally to deal about Maledictions, is the perfect Cha-"racter of an angry Man, who when he cannot convince, "will threaten; this therefore is not only unworthy of "God, but unbecoming of a prudent Man." But if nevertheleſs, the Clergy ſhould be guilty of theſe Things, we are bound to adhere to the ſacred Text rather than to them; and from thence it appears, that the *Paracleet*, which is the Holy Ghoſt, being to *reprove the World of Sin*, He may at any Time hereafter, as well as heretofore, uſe the like Invectives

ctives, againſt the Chriſtian Clergy alſo, who thus with-ſtand Him, and expoſe themſelves juſtly to his Reproofs.

DOCTRINE XI.

It is an horrid Affront, to aſcribe falſe Syntax *and* Declenſions, *or* Improprieties in any Language, *to the all-wiſe Spirit of God, as if He could not dictate true and proper Language. A bungling Manner of Expreſſion therefore, manifeſtly ſhews, there's no Direction of God in it.*

Anſwer. That there are Improprieties in the Language of the Holy Ghoſt, in the New Teſtament, none can deny, that underſtand ever ſo little of the *Greek* Tongue; and we might largely prove the ſame, from the Confeſſion of the learned Divines themſelves. We here only deſire to refer our ſelves unto Dr. *Mills*'s frequent Obſervation, " that in " the various Readings of the Text, *that* which unto Men " ſeems moſt abſur'd, ought even upon that very Account " to be eſteem'd, the genuine inſpired Word; becauſe the " Learned in ſuch Caſe muſt be preſumed to have alter'd " it, for the Sake of its Abſurdity." But why do others of the Clergy, affix ſo horrid an Affront upon the Holy Spirit, as if ſome Improprieties in Language argued, that He could not dictate true? Since the Apoſtle *Paul*, when moved by the Holy Ghoſt, tells us in 1 *Cor.* ii. 13. that he ſpake not in the Words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, or uſed excellency of Speech and enticing Language; and gives us the Reaſon of it to be, that our Faith ſhould not ſtand in the Wiſdom of Men. Wherefore, the end of the Dictator of Holy Writ, in often paſſing over the Rules of Grammar might be purpoſely to caſt a Blemiſh upon Polemick Learning, that no Fleſh ſhould glory in his Preſence. But it is the moſt pungent of all Sorrows, to find the Clergy by this Article, joining Iſſue with the Rejectors of all Revelation, who in Dr. *Nicholls*'s *Conf.* Part iv. ſay thus;

" The Apoſtles would not have wrote ſo barbarous *Greek* " had they been inſpir'd of God, it being unreaſonable " to aſcribe all thoſe Soleciſms to the Holy Ghoſt. But " if the compoſing of the Scriptures was any Ways owing " to the Holy Ghoſt, methinks they ſhould have been " wrote, in a much finer Language, than we find they are; " for the common Reaſon of Mankind expects, that a " Divine Compoſition ſhould have in it the Heigth of Elo- " quence. Therefore the meanneſs of the Scripture Stile, " and the Want of exact Method, and the many uncouth " and odd Expreſſions in thoſe Books, has been always a

" great

" great Argument to me, againſt their Divinity. There " are many impertinent and trivial Paſſages in the Scrip- " tural Books, and they are full of needleſs Repetitions, " Trifling Relations, Queſtions, Anſwers, and Remarks, " ſuch as do not agree with the Prudence of a Wiſe In- " dicter.

Unto which Dr. *Nicholls* anſwers, " The Holy Scriptures " are wrote in a plain and ſimple Stile, accommodated to " the Uſe of the Vulgar, and many Things in it wrote " according to their Way of ſpeaking; ſo that what ye " Gentlemen, who have ſtudied for an exact and elaborate " Stile, may call trivial, God Almighty does think to be " wiſely contriv'd, for the Capacities of ordinary People, " who may be beſt edifyed thereby. But there is no doubt " to be made, but if the Holy Ghoſt, had deſigned to write " the Bible, to ſuit the Ears of curious Scholars, he would " have compoſed ſome Parts of it, in a more exact and " caſtigated Stile. Why muſt the Holy Ghoſt be obliged, to " make the Apoſtles ſpeak *Greek*, juſt as they did at *Athens*? " The Holy Spirit did not think fit to condeſcend to ſuch " a Nicety as this, to have Regard in a Divine Revelation " to ſpruce Phraſes in Language. The Apoſtles were to be " infallible Divines; and if ſo be their Doctrine was, true " he could not think himſelf obliged to take Care, of the " fineneſs of their *Greek*, or to make them *true Grammarians*. " But if the *Greek* of the New Teſtament, had been as " ſmooth and pure, as that of *Xenophon* or *Iſocrates*, the Un- " believers would have cavelled at it more, for the Ope- " roſeneſs of its Stile, or its being too much like human Elo- " quence; which would have been a more material Ob- " jection, to its Inſpiration, than its not being wrote in " exact *Greek*. And as to Method, (ſays Dr. *Nicholls*) that " is a Thing not at all look'd upon in a Phyſician's Bill, or " valuable in a Lawyer's Conveyance, much leſs ought it " to be eſteem'd, in Matters of ſo great Concernment, as " the Scriptures contain. But even this Want of Artificial " Method, is more agreeable to the Nature of Inſpiration; " for Inſpiration is the Language of another World, ſome- " thing of *the Reaſoning of Spirits*: We, to make Things lie " plain before our groſs Underſtandings, are of Neceſſity " to uſe the Ways of Argumentation among Men; but " Pure Spirits have no Need of thoſe little methodical " Diſtinctions. Hence it comes to paſs, that tho' the Ho- " ly Ghoſt does vouchſafe to ſpeak in the Language of " Men, yet in his Compoſitions there are ſome Traces to

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" be found, of the Celeſtial Tongue, peculiar to the An-
" gelick Natures, whoſe flaming Thoughts are never clog-
" ged with the cold and jejune Laws of our Human Me-
" thod.

DOCTRINE XII.

Speaking with Tongues is one Sign *of a Demoniack; the Devil has the Command of Languages, and no Wonder if he inſpire and enable Men to ſpeak them.* Meric Caſaubon *gives us ſeveral Inſtances of Perſons poſſeſſed by the Devil, who ſpake ſtrange Languages, ſuch as they were utterly ignorant of. But the Holy Spirit would never ſpeak in a Language, that could not be underſtood by the Hearers, which is* meer Mockery, *and unworthy of Him.*

Anſwer. That the Devil has Power to ſpeak or inſpire Languages, and that Grammatically or politely too, 'tis poſſible may be proved from Heathen Authors, giving an Account of their Prieſts, Prophets, and Oracles; as in particular it is ſaid, that *Apollonius Tyanæus* ſpake all Manner of Languages by Inſpiration. This therefore is a good Proof againſt the meer *Sadducee*, of an inviſible Agent on that Perſon, and ought to acquit him of being wholly an Impoſtor. But why ſhould this be any more *a Sign* of an Evil, than of a Good Spirit, inſpiring? We have as good Authority, that the Holy One did ſpeak in foreign Languages by his Prophets, not only in the Apoſtolick Age, but in that of *Irenæus*, as ye have for the Devil's doing ſo. Wherefore, when its ſaid, that *Tongues are for a Sign to them that believe not*, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 22. that the Perſons were in general prophetically authorized; the Apoſtle therein ſuppoſes the very Heathen to be more equitable than ye are, to conclude the Poſſeſſion to be by an evil Spirit only. But indeed the Subject Matter of ſuch Languages, is to decide the Quality of that Spirit who ſpeaks them thro' the Organs of a Man. Suppoſe therefore, ſuch an one propheſying or ſpeaking by the Spirit, does manifeſt the Secrets of the Heart, in others perſonally; ſuppoſe he declares the wonderful Works of God, and unfolds the deep Things of the Divine Council, celebrates the Deity with Praiſes and ſpiritual Songs, and in the whole does propheſy in foreign Tongues, according to the Analogy of Faith; to allow this to proceed from the Devil, would be to overthrow the Purport of our Saviour's Argument, *Mat.* xii. 25, 26. Becauſe there the Devil is declared incapable to will the deſtroying of his own Kingdom. But this ſort of Divinity, which would make

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the bare ſpeaking with Tongues, without ſuch edifying Prophecy, the Sign only of a Devil; and make it a meer Mockery, unworthy of, and impracticable by the Holy Ghoſt, to ſpeak ſo, as not to be underſtood by the Hearers, is, what we cannot underſtand; becauſe in 1 *Cor.* xiv. 2. we read of ſome in the Chriſtian Aſſemblies, that ſpake in the Spirit, Myſteries, tho' it was in an unknown Tongue, ſuch as no Man underſtood; and yet he ſpake unto God tho' not unto Men. And this Manner of ſpeaking with Tongues, is expreſly mention'd as one Gift of the Holy Ghoſt, diſtinguiſhed from that of *ſpeaking unto Men to Edification*; tho' it is ſaid, the Perſon edified himſelf thereby, *Verſe* 4. and therefore the Apoſtle wiſhed, that they all might ſpeak with Tongues, *Verſe* 5. But if our Divines pleaſe to read the whole Chapter, they will find that the ſpeaking of Tongues unknown to the Hearers, is allowed to be a Gift of the Holy Ghoſt, profitable to the Perſon, tho' to others he appear'd a Barbarian, and was calumniated as mad; wherefore we hope, they will upon Second Thoughts, ceaſe to fill up the Character of Scoffers in this Point, at his ſacred Operations.

DOCTRINE XIII.

It is inconceivable how the Prophet himſelf could know, that any Revelation was from God. What Impulſes, Motions or Force, or what ſort of Perception, *will clearly argue a ſupernatural Cauſe, we cannot apprehend; theſe Things have been the Cauſe of much Deluſion. A Voice therefore, or Call prophetick, muſt have ſomething ſo peculiar in it, that nothing Human or Diabolical could do the like. For, if we conſider the Caſe of a diſorder'd* Imagination, *in which Men believe they hear and ſee ſtrange Things, this will render a Man's thinking he hears a Voice or ſees a Viſion, a very inſufficient Ground to conclude himſelf appointed by it, to a high Employment*: God is a Spirit and as ſuch, cannot be revealed to the Senſes; and as to inward Impulſes or Impreſſions, *for a Man who feels them, to affirm from thence, that he is inſpired, is to affirm with the utmoſt certainty, that of which he can have* evidently no Certainty. *But as to Extacies and Viſions, how ſhould we know that a Man is not impoſed on? For, when the Devil can put on an Appearance of an Angel of Light, no Man's bare Word is to be depended on. Certainly, no Body ought to believe an extraordinary Revelation, the Truth of which in Fact reſts upon a ſingle Teſtimony.*

since the Witness of one Person must necessarily be fruitless; this is to represent the Creator to act in vain, which is to admit Him to act against all the Laws, He has establish'd in Nature.

Answer. That the Devil has had his Prophets, and that he has aped the Deity in Visions and Inspirations, and so caused much Delusion, has nothing in it, that should supersede our Belief of Revelation; but the Arguments and Doctrines above cited, seem to be of an *Epicurean* Leaven, that turns all preternatural Things into Ridicule, without distinguishing the Operations of the good, from those of the evil Spirit. Now, the Subject we are upon, is that of publick Prophecy, not being concerned so much about Revelations of a private and personal Respect; and why then concerning this, is Delusion so much charged upon it, when we submit the same to the utmost Scrutiny by Scripture? Can there be, with the Analogy of Faith, and Harmony with Presidents of Holy Writ, any such Delusion upon this Head, as in the total Infidelity of these Things? The Fourth Century indeed, did adjudge Enthusiasm (for any thing appears) either the true, or the false, to be a greater Heresy than that of denying the Deity of Christ, or of the Holy Ghost: But better Things ought to be expected of those who profess to reform, even according to the Pattern of the Apostolick Times. We know, that then the Holy Ghost was poured out, in dreaming of Dreams, seeing of Visions, and by speaking under some Sort of Impulse, Motion, Force, Impression, or Perception; and yet ye declare, there is no Certainty in any of these; for positively *God cannot be revealed to the Senses*, either by Voice or Vision; and lest we shou'd think ye meant, that it must be then by some *inward Impressions*, ye add, That 'tis evident there can be no Certainty, in any of these neither.

We fear there may be greater Delusion in these Doctrines, than That ye would suppress by them. For, as ye will not grant, what kind of Motion or Force, does argue any supernatural Cause at all; ye seem very much to lean towards *Sadducism*, and encourage a Disbelief of the Agency of Angels and Spirits, which was the Corruption but of a small Sect among the *Jews*, and is always esteem'd an Error, or Heresy. Ye know, that the whole of Reveal'd Religion does necessarily turn upon this Hinge; and therefore, it might reasonably be expected, that Gospel-Ministers should use their utmost Force against the great Delusion of *Deism*, that is, the despising and rejecting all Revelation; especi-

eſpecially, ſince ye are loudly warned by one of your own Brethren, That the overflowing Infidelity of this Age, is like to be the Ruin of theſe Kingdoms, and draw down the laſt Vials of the fierceſt Wrath of Almighty God, upon them. Surely thoſe that have the Honour of Chriſt at Heart, cannot well reliſh, or go on to teach ſuch Doctrines, as put Arguments into the Mouth of the Abominable, and the Blaſphemers of Scripture, who have improved them thus, in Dr. *Nicholls*'s *Conf.* Part ii. *p.* 138--141.

Says the *Deiſt* there; " That Inſpiration which the *Jews* " and after them the Chriſtians, would needs have to pro- " ceed immediately from God, is only the Effect of *a vivid* " *Imagination*; but if they had underſtood better the natu- " ral Cauſes of Inſpiration, they would never have been guil- " of ſuch manifeſt Abſurdities. Therefore it is not to be " thought that the Prophets had any more Converſe with " God immediately, than other Men; but only they had " warmer Heads, a quicker Imagination, and a more " lively Fancy. Other Mens Imaginations and Dreams, " did not leave ſuch laſting Impreſſions upon their Minds; " but the Prophetick Imaginators had ſuch ſtrong Fancies " in their Heads, that they were as clear to them, as the " Repreſentations made by their outward Senſes; and they " thought they were as certain of what they ſo fancied, " as of what they heard and ſaw. And thus it was, that " the Prophets, for the moſt Part, were out of the Country " People, or at leaſt Perſons of no Erudition; ſo that theſe " Folk having but little Underſtanding, had ſtronger Paſ- " ſions, and did abound more in Imagination, than Men " who had better Senſe, and who governed their Fancies " by their Reaſon: But that *Imagination was the Founda-* " *tion of Revelation*, and the Cauſe of it, appears by their " Prophecies differing only by the Diverſity of their Imagi- " nation. Thus *Eliſha* could not propheſy, until a Min- " ſtrel was brought to allay his Choller, that being in a " good Humour, he might be inclined to imagine as plea- " ſant Things, as the Kings would have him. On the " contrary, when *Moſes* was angry, the Slaughter of the " *Ægyptians* was revealed to him; and when the Spirit lift " up *Ezekiel* in Bitterneſs and in hot Anger, he propheſyed " the Miſeries of the *Jews*; therefore *Jeremiah* being al- " ways a melancholy Man, and weary of his Life, did no- " thing but propheſy dreadful Calamities.

Unto which Dr. *Nicholls* anſwers, " There are innume- " rable Inſtances in Scripture, of the Prophets *being in the*

" *Spirit, and of the Spirits coming upon them,* which ſhews " that Prophecy proceeded from another Cauſe than Ima- " gination, *viz.* the Influence of the Holy Spirit; and this " is undeniable. But indeed it is not eaſie to give a Phi- " loſophical and Notional Account of this ſupernatural " Influence, or *by what Means* it was conveyed, or by what " Criterion or Marks, they could diſtinguiſh it from Delu- " ſion; becauſe, we who are not honour'd with theſe ſuper- " natural Gifts, and therefore can have no Idea of theſe " Things, as having never been the Objects of our Under- " ſtandings; nevertheleſs, becauſe we ordinary Perſons " can have no Notion of this extraordinary Influx of God, " therefore for us to ſay it cannot be, is only to expoſe our " own Ignorance. But a blind Man might with as much " Modeſty, pretend to demonſtrate againſt the Exiſtence " of Colours, or a Clown laugh at Mathematical Theorems, " as we can pretend to diſpute againſt *the Certainty of this* " *ſupernatural Influence.* For, it is not to be doubted, but " the Ptophets had as abſolute Certainty of the Truth of it, " as we have of Things that do immediately ſtrike our " Senſes, and therefore could as little queſtion their Viſions " and Inſpirations, as we do our Senſes. Now, if God has " been pleaſed to make an extraordinary *Impreſſion,* upon " ſome Mens Minds by Viſion or otherwiſe, which He does " not on all, muſt we therefore judge it impoſſible, becauſe " we who do not experience it, do not perceive it? Or " muſt every Man be mad and enthuſiaſtical, that hath bet- " ter Eyes than we? I am ſure that this a very mad Way " of Arguing, and there is no more Reaſon to queſtion the " Truth of the Revelation to the Prophets, than blind Men " have to queſtion our Sight."

'Tis then, no little Comfort to find, there are ſome a- mong the Clergy, who do eſteem *Sadduciſm* and *Deiſm* a Deluſion pernicious, and an Infidelity, wherewith thoſe in Communion with Chriſt, ſhould have no Partnerſhip. We cannot but ſecretly mourn over the Growth of this peſti- lential Deluſion; and as the ſtated Miniſter is chiefly, if not only capable, by a vigorous Exertion to put a ſtop to that Contagion, and by the Tenour of his Function is bound to do it; we hope the Number of the Encouragers and Pro- moters of it among them, will daily decreaſe; and that they will concur no more with the Syſtems of Infidelity, which blow up the Fundamental Principles, of all reveal- ed Religion. But until theſe Men ſhall duly recollect themſelves, and conſult better the Honour and Duty of

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their own Character, in this Point; we muſt of Neceſſity, and are forceably conſtrained by the Love we owe to God, and for the Glory of his Name, to oppoſe them.

The various *Gifts of the Spirit* of Prophecy, wherewith the *Corinthians* were enrich'd, which muſt be about Thirty Years at leaſt after the *Pentecoſt* (by that of *Peter*, *Acts* xv. 7. απ' ημερων αρχαιων *the long ago* theremention'd) are ſtiled *a Confirmation of the precedent Teſtimony of Chriſt*, 1 *Cor.* i. 6. And afterwards in 2 *Cor.* i. 21. 22. the Apoſtle terms the ſame anointing of the Spirit to be an Eſtabliſhment of them and others, in the Faith of Chriſt. According to which Foundation of Reaſoning, the ſpreading and new Plantation of Chriſtian Churches, far and wide extended by the Evangeliſts or prophetical Preachers, after the Age of the Apoſtles; and the Holy Ghoſt ſtill poured out in Viſions, Voices and Revelations, in the Second and Third Centuries, were to the Confirmation and Eſtabliſhment of the Churches, in the fundamental Principles of Faith on God revealing. And thus, we ſhall have Occaſion to mention by-and-by, that as the Faith of the Saints was of old, even ever from the Beginning, built upon the (now accounted) fooliſh Things of God, the ſupernatural Influence of Propheſying, and *the Means* uſed by Him, of Viſion and Voice; ſo the primitive Cnriſtians conſtrued all theſe to be Miracles, Signs, and Wonders, wrought by the Holy Ghoſt: And by theſe external Demonſtrations of his Power and Preſence, they concluded that the Glory of God did manifeſt it ſelf to the Church; until the *Epicurean* Philoſophy, which turns all preternatural Things into Ridicule, grew to be in Vogue among the Learned. And as to the Modern Ages, what Sort of Philoſophy is now in Vogue, we cannot tell; but it appears abundantly, by the Confeſſion of ſeveral among the Clergy abovecited, that they are as blind Men, and the Viſion of all Prophecy, is to them as unknown, as the Contents of a Letter ſealed: For they confeſs plainly, that becauſe theſe ſupernatural Gifts have not been the Objects of their Underſtandings, and their own Senſes have not been ſpiritually exerciſed; therefore, they can have no Idea of theſe Things, nor any Notion of the extraordinary Influence of God: Nay further, as for themſelves they own, they cannot apprehend, what ſort of Perception, or what Kind of Impulſes, inward or outward, will clearly argue a ſupernatural Cauſe: They give their Sentiments alſo, even for all others; that it is inconceivable how the Prophet himſelf could know, that any

Revelation was ever from God. But as one among them has declared, that a blind Man might with as much Modesty pretend to demonstrate against the Existence of Colours, as they can pretend to dispute against *the Certainty of such supernatural Influence*, and extraordinary Impression by Vision or otherwise, as belongs to the Prophet; we hope God will graciously open their Eyes, to see out of Obscurity in this Matter; and if they will please, to look only thro' the Optick, of the perfect and enlightning Word of God, the Mist of vain Philosophy which obstructs the Eyesight, will soon vanish. In the mean time, whilst they are so confessedly ignorant, it is not for them to judge of Things they know not, and call every one an Impostor, mad and enthusiastical, who may have better Eyes than they; and if they did but allow any Evidence from Enthusiasts, the Objections of *Deists* might be overturn'd, by rational Demonstration that Vision is not the Effect of meer Fancy.

We are not pleading for any Thing, wherein there is any competent Evidence of a natural Disorder in the Brain, or which can be concluded by scriptural Reason, for meer Imagination; but have in this whole Treatise, built upon the utmost Manifestation of the Spirit, that the Law of God will permit; and upon such distinguishing Signs of Prophecy, as are warrantable from thence, according to my best Ability to conceive of it. But when the Clergy by this Article of Doctrine teach us, that no Man's bare Word (whatever Sobriety in Judgment, and Integrity of Life, he might be of) is to be depended on, for any Vision or Revelation, this Position seems to us, to reproach the Holy Ghost, who (we are sure) throughout the sacred Scriptures, has chosen and used to reveal Himself, to single Persons severally: But if the Prophet, giving a Report of his Visions (and by the Connexion of Circumstances attending him therein, and making it out that his own Imagination natural, could not be rationally adjudged to frame the same, especially when he did not know it to be an Angel or Vision till its Disappearance) never ought to have been believed; here is a sufficient Apology made, for all those whoever derided or rejected Him. And should we join with this infidel Principle, as also with that other, that God cannot be revealed, as to the Senses by Vision, and that no such Manifestation can appoint a Man, to be the special Messenger of God; or should we further agree, that there can be no Certainty in these Things; we must offend against the whole Generation of the Children of Faith, and

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overturn the Authority of great Part of the Scripture, and disgrace all the Evidences of the invisible World. O happy for us, that former Ages were not so sceptical as ours! We might then have been without great Part of the Scripture!

We therefore adhere to the Credit of the sacred Text, and desire to tread in the Steps of those antient Fathers in the Faith for Ages long pass'd, and in those particularly who owned surviving Prophecy, during the Three first Centuries of the Christian Church; as we have largely explain'd it, in the First and Second Parts of this Tract. And as to the Rules of Philosophy, if the Divines are pleased to stick to them in Opposition to the Scripture, and to tell us from them, that *to admit the Validity of one Witness for a Vision to him, is to represent the Creator to act in vain, which is to admit Him to act against all the Laws He has established in Nature.* We answer; That if no Scripture Principles are admitted, whereon Proof may be given of these extraordinary Things, but on the contrary the same are superseded and overthrown; we cannot wonder at the threatning Deluge of Infidelity, by which under the Colour of such Philosophy, and Topicks of like Kind with this last, the Authority of the Scripture it self is so much despised, as appears in *Conference* with the *Deist*, Part iv. *p.* 178. For those who deny the Authority of Scripture Principles and Presidents, are stricty *Deists*.

DOCTRINE XIV.

Whensoever God sends Prophets, He will, as He hath always done, *send them with the Power of working Signs and Wonders.*

Answer. Dr. *Hick*'s *Spirit of Enthusiasm exorcised*, tell us, "That in *Heb.* ii. 4. the Apostle saith of the Disciples "of Jesus, that *God bore them witness, both with Signs and "Wonders, and with divers Miracles and Distributions* (μεριστοις) *of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will.* Under "which Head, says he, may be reduced, the audible and "visible Manifestations of the Power and Presence of God; "such as Voices from Heaven, heard by one, or more; "the shaking of the Places where the Christians prayed, "(as also, *the Noise of a Wind, and the Symptom of Drunkenness,*) and the Appearance of Angels, those ministring "Spirits, to bring Messages, Orders, and Directions from "God, or otherwise to assist his Elect. All which, *Cosmas "Indicopleustes* reckons among the *Wonders* ascribed to the "Holy Ghost, who by his outward, as well as inward Aids

" and Aſſiſtances, ſupplied the Preſence of Chriſt to his " Church. Thus, ſaith he, *Joel foretold the Wonders, that* " *were to be wrought by the Holy Ghoſt, in the Time of Chriſt,* " *as Prophecies, Dreams, Viſions, Voices, and the Appearance* " *of Angels, which Women beheld at the Paſſion of our Lord.* " This latter ſort of *Miracle*, (Angelick Apparitions,) as " well as other Viſion, was in the Church in the Time " of St. *Cyprian*, who tells us of an Angel, that appear- " ed to a dying Biſhop, in ſhape of a Young Man. Theſe " external Demonſtrations, and Teſtimonies of the Pow- " er and Preſence of God, are diſtinguiſhed by the Apo- " ſtle, in the Text foremention'd, from the internal Opera- " tions and Gifts; and I thought requiſite to mention " them, becauſe they were wrought by God, *to manifeſt* " his Glory in the Church."

Well! If the Miracles, Signs and Wonders, wrought by the Holy Ghoſt, in Dreams, Viſions, Voices, Propheſyings, and the Appearance of Angels, be God's bearing Witneſs to Believers; and theſe external Demonſtrations and Teſtimonies of his Power and Preſence be allowed the Manifeſtation of his Glory in the Church; we are agreed, that God ever did ſend his Prophets, with *Signs and Wonders* manifeſt. And thus *Nebuchadnezzar* ſpeaks of his Divine Dreams, *Dan.* iv. 2, 3. *It was ſeemly before me, to ſhew the Signs and Wonders that the High God hath wrought towards me; how great are his Signs! and how mighty are his Wonders!* Thus we find, the Viſions given to the Prophets in Scripture, always mention'd with aſtoniſhing Admiration of God's Graciouſneſs and Power in them; as alſo in the primitive Ages, they are never ſpoken of without religious Reverence, by the Perſons to whom they were vouchſafed, or by thoſe who believ'd them; and no Wonder, that they are in the Citation above, called outward Demonſtrations and Teſtimonies of God's Power and Preſence; for all theſe ſeveral Operations of the Holy Ghoſt, are outward, with reſpect to the Perſon of the Prophet himſelf; nay, and the Signs of Prophecy in the greater and leſſer Extacies, are outwardly viſible alſo to other People, as at large appears, in the Firſt Part hereof, on that Head: And certainly they are miraculous too, if the common Definition of a Miracle, may take Place; that is, an Effect appearing ſo wonderful to the Senſe, that to the reaſon of its Spectators, it is not accountable for, from natural Cauſes. I know the Age we live in, is become ſo refined in Atheiſtical Criticiſm, that they will ſcarce forbear laughing at the Simplicity of

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thoſe Ages, that eſteem'd Viſion, Voices, Dreams, and the reſt of the above-mention'd, to be *Signs and Wonders*; tho' upon that very Simplicity our Faith is founded, and our Enjoyment of the Scriptures is owing to it. Having therefore a Rule to appeal unto, we ſay, *to the Law, and to the Teſtimony!* Thoſe that are content to be Fools, in the Opinion of the Wiſe of this World, and to become as little Children, in learning to know God concluſively from Scripture, muſt of Neceſſity own, that theſe were ſuch Miracles, as did ſufficiently denominate a Prophet ſent of God, when his Doctrine and the Fruits of the *Spirit teaching* by him, were juſtify'd by the Analogy of Faith, or their Harmony with preceding Prophecy of Divine Inſpiration. Becauſe, as to other Signs and Wonders, attending the Prophet, they find none in the Inſtances following, nor any Miracles wrought by them.

Deborah, a Propheteſs, who judged *Iſrael*, *Judg.* iv.

Another in *Chap.* vi. 8.

Hannah propheſieth in Prayer, 1 *Sam.* ii.

Nathan a Prophet, 2 *Sam.* xii. and elſewhere.

Gad a Prophet, *Chap.* xxiv.

Ahijah, 1 *Kings* xi.

Shemaiah, *Chap.* xii.

Jehu, *Chap.* xvi.

Micaiah, *Chap.* xxii.

The Prophets ſlain by *Jezabel*, and

The Hundred that were hid by *Obadiah*, *Chap.* xviii.

Huldah the Propheteſs, 2 *Kings* xxii.

Heman, the King's Seer, in the Words of God, 1 *Chron.* xxv. 5.

Aſaph the Seer, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 30.

Jeduthun the King's Seer, 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 15.

The Spirit of God came upon *Azariah*, 2 *Chron.* xv. 1.

Hanani the Seer, *Chap.* xvi. 7.

Jehu the Seer, or Prophet, *Chap.* xix. 2.

Jahaziel, *Chap.* xx. 14. *Eliezer*, Ver. 37.

Zechariah, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 20.

The Man of God, *Chap.* xxv. 7. Another Prophet, *ver.* 15.

Oded, *Chap.* xxviii. 9.

Other Prophets indefinite in Number, *Chap.* xxviii. and *Chap.* xxxiii. and *Chap.* 36.

The inſpir'd Writers of ſome Books, as thoſe of *Ruth* and *Eſther*.

Job and his Three Friends.

Agur, *Prov.* xxx.

Lemuel's

Lemuel's Mother, *Chap.* xxxi.
Iddo the Seer, 2 *Chron.* ix. 29.
Another *Iddo*, *Zech.* i. 1.
Igdaliah in *Jer.* xxxv.

Hoſea is ſaid to have propheſied Eighty Four Years, and yet no Miracle attended, that we know of, any more than in *Jeremiah*'s like Miniſtry for Forty odd Years, unleſs the marvellous Power of God in protecting and delivering them ſo long, under the univerſal Hatred of the Nation, be accounted ſo. The ſame alſo may be obſerved of *Ezekiel*, *Joel*, *Amos*, *Obadiah*, *Micah*, *Nahum*, *Habakkuk*, *Zephaniah*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah*, *Malachi*; concerning all whom it is ſaid only to this Effect, that *the Word of the Lord came to them*, *An Angel*, or, *God ſpake to them*, *The Lord put forth his Hand, and touched their Mouth*, *The Hand of the Lord was upon them*; they ſaw Viſions, heard Voices, and they could not forbear, but muſt propheſy. Beſides, *Enoch*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Iſaiah*, and others, were Prophets ſome Years, before any other Miracles attended them (as we know of) than ſuch as are herein already mention'd. In the New Teſtament alſo, there was *Elizabeth*, *Anna*, *Simeon*, *Zacharias*, and the *Virgin Mary*, filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and propheſying, without working Miracles upon others. *Ananias*, and the Women who ſaw Angels, *Paul* himſelf who was ordained a Prophetical Miniſter in his firſt Viſion, *Timothy*, *Titus*, *Barnabas*, and a great many more in the Epiſtles, and Acts ſpecified, are Witneſſes againſt this Doctrine, for any Thing appears. Wherefore, let others judge if they pleaſe, that the Church in her deſpiſing of Propheſyings, is grown up now from the Weakneſs of a Child to the more excellent Eſtate of Manhood; we conclude, that the bold aſſerting of a Falſity by this Article, ſhews that Men are aſham'd of the Simplicity of the Goſpel; and becauſe they love not Truth, they have apoſtatized from it. But as to thoſe that are eſpouſed as a chaſt Virgin to Chriſt, they are *to fear leſt by any Means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve, thro' his Subtilty, ſo their Minds ſhould be corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. xi. 33.

DOCTRINE XV.

Some Novatians *are ſaid to work Miracles*, as Paulus *and* Eutichianus; *and God ſuffer'd even the worſt of Hereticks, to work ſtupendious Things, as* Simon Magus, Menander, Marcus, Carpocrates; *ſo that the Fathers of the Church did caution the People againſt Miracle-Workers, leſt*

leſt they ſhould believe a Lie on that Account. Nevertheleſs, the Holy Scripture does conſtantly reſolve the Divine Authority of a Perſon or Revelation, into Miracles, as one of the eſſential Marks, by which it is diſtinguiſhed from Impoſture, and without which it is not to be receiv'd, upon any other Account whatſoever. When God truly reveals Himſelf, it muſt have the utmoſt Evidence and Proof, unleſs we will make the Deity miſerably to triſle, or worſe; and becauſe it is intended to be known to others, the Pretenders are unavoidably obliged to prove their immediate Inſpiration, which cannot be done without Miracles. For if it cannot be proved by Miracles, that is all one as if it never were, as to any good the World can reap from it. Touching the Signs and Bodily Impreſſions, that attended the Jewiſh *Prophets, the Evidence that they were acted under them, by the Divine Spirit, was their Miracles, which diſtinguiſhed them from Madmen. We know not, how far by ſome Secrets in Nature, miraculous Effects may be produced; therefore thoſe who work Miracles, ought to be reſplendent in Holineſs of Life, otherwiſe their Miracles ought to be eſteem'd Impoſtures. That Miracles may appear really ſuch, it is abſolutely requiſite, that they be done upon the Spot where requir'd to be believ'd, and not at a Diſtance; and no other Evidence of this kind ought to be eſteem'd ſatisfactory, but ſuch as Chriſt and his Apoſtles came with. It is alſo abſolutely requiſite that they be done chiefly upon Strangers, and not Friends, or precedently Followers of the Worker. There is a Sort of* Natural Magick, *and the* Corpuſcular Philoſophy, *with ſome further Improvements, that may yet be made in it, will ſolve the* Phænomena *of many natural Effects, by the* Effluviums *of certain Animal Volatile Spirits, or ſubtle little Particles of Bodies, of different Figures and Shapes, with various differing Motions, that go from Bodies to Bodies, and may by the Voice, or Touch of the Hand, penetrate into the Bodies and animal Spirits of other Men, and make Impreſſion there. How can then Revelation be proved? By ſuch outward Manifeſtations only, as denote Infinite Power and Majeſty, and are not within the Reach of natural Cauſes, or the Power of the Devil to produce. Suppoſing then a Man were really inſpir'd, yet whilſt he gives no Proof of his Inſpiration, our refuſing to receive him, is no more than we are bound in Duty to do; for it would be juſt the ſame Raſhneſs in us, to receive as an Inſpir'd Prophet, a Man that is really ſo, while as yet there is no Evidence appearing,*

pearing, of his being ſo inſpir'd, as it would be to give Credit to an Impoſtor. Now the Proof or Evidence of any Man's being inſpir'd, which may reaſonably be requir'd is, ſuch as Moſes *the Lawgiver of the* Jews, *and ſuch as Chriſt and his Apoſtles, the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel did give; and this Proof may be with good Reaſon expected and required of any Man, at the very Time, when he utters his pretended Inſpiration; for thus* Moſes *proved his Divine Miſſion to thoſe to whom he was ſent; and thus our Saviour and his Apoſtles proved theirs, to whom they firſt preached, that is, by ſuch Works, as could not be done but by the Power of God. And then, when the Pretenders to Inſpiration do ſuch Works, we ſhall have* ſome Reaſon, *to liſten to what they have to ſay to us; but till then we ſhall have none. Without theſe, any Man that aſſumes or pretends a Divine Call, as that he is inſpir'd, or feels ſupernatural Impreſſions, ought not to be ſuffered to ſpeak, becauſe we cannot be aſſur'd, but he has ſome dangerous Deſign in it.*

Anſwer. As in the Apoſtolick Age of Chriſtianity, it is mention'd, *Heb.* ii. 4. *God beareth Witneſs to Prophets, with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles and Diſtributions of the Holy Ghoſt, according to HIS OWN WILL*; theſe conſiſting in Voices, Viſions, Dreams, and Propheſyings, were by the Primitive Ages, as under the preceding Article, receiv'd and eſteem'd as Miracles; and ſome Fathers of the Church, in this Article confeſſed, as *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, and *Tertullian*, builded on them for ſufficient Evidences of God revealing, and did warn People againſt the too forward building upon other more oſtentatious ones: Seeing theſe latter, as well as former, needed to be proved Divine, by the Doctrine (if any) to them annexed, we think therefore, your Demands of Miracles, excluſively to, and above, thoſe Diſtributions of the Holy Ghoſt, whereby God bore Witneſs to his Meſſengers, *according to his own Will*, is altogether Unſcriptural, as appears from the number of Prophets the Scripture gives us without Miracles; God's Will, and not yours ought to take Place. But according to your Syſtems, the *Jews* had right to demand from *Hoſea*, (and all the reſt cited in Article XIV.) Miraculous Proofs of his Inſpiration, equal to thoſe of *Moſes*; and from *Amos*, the like Exertions of Divine Power, as thoſe vouchſafed to *Elias*. In like manner, unleſs one like to *Timothy*, could ſhew the like Signs for his Prophecy, that our Lord did for his being the Son of God, He was, by your Syſtems, to be treated no better

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ter than an Impoſtor. Thus alſo, unleſs God wrought the ſame *ſpecial Miracles* by the Hands of one Inſpired in the Degree of *Agabus*, as he did, *Acts* xix. 11. by thoſe of *Paul* a Maſter-builder, he ought, by the Rules of your preſcribing, not to be heard, liſten'd to, or ſuffer'd to ſpeak. Ye confeſs, ye your ſelves do not know how far the ſecret Powers in Nature may reach, and yet ye ſay, a Miracle muſt neceſſarily exceed all poſſible reach of them. In like manner, ye are at a loſs to fix how far the Power of Satan, by Divine Permiſſion, may extend in Miracles, ſince he cauſed the Fire of God to come down from Heaven, *Job* i. 16. ſince the Magicians of *Ægypt*, caſt down every Man his Rod, and of a Stick they became living Serpents, and they turned Water into Blood by their Inchantments, and brought up Frogs, as *Moſes* upon the Land of *Ægypt*. Ye have quoted ſtupendious Miracles, wrought by the Devil in Hereticks of the Chriſtian Name, and ye have inſtanced his ſpeaking correctly (by your allowance) Languages unknown to the Perſon; and ye are provided with Ammunition of this kind abundant, out of the Stories of *Plutarch*, *Cicero*, and *Apollonius Tyanæus*, in the Firſt Century; all theſe Things we know will render your Faith in a Prophet, very difficult at laſt, to be produced by Miracles; for ſome of your Brethren ſay, That they cannot prove Inſpiration; and ſince ye ſay that the Devil has, and may work ſtupendious Ones, and the Denomination of *Lying or True* Miracles, follows the Quality of the Worker, that is, whether it be a True or a Falſe Spirit, and the fixing of this after all, muſt depend upon Proof of another ſort, and often not upon the Miracles themſelves: Nay, if Miracles were wrought, even ſuch as *Moſes*, and our Divine Saviour performed, all that ye grant then, is no more, than that ye ſhould have SOME REASON *to hear what the Prophet has to ſay to ye*; but till then, he ought not to be ſuffered to ſpeak: Nay, 'tis abſolutely required too, that the Proof abovemention'd ſhould be wrought upon the Spot; for if at a Diſtance, 'tis not ſatisfactory Evidence, by your Laws of Tryal; and this Proof is required of any Man, at the very Time when he utters his pretended Inſpiration; and finally, ſuch an one's Miracles, however otherwiſe they ſtand the Proof, they muſt alſo be attended with reſplendant Holineſs of Life in the Worker, or elſe they ought to be counted Impoſtures; ſo that, conſidering the *Jews* blacken'd the Life of our Saviour, and He has told us before hand, that the true Prophets He would ſend, ſhould find all

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manner of Evil ſpoken of them, as it ever was with the Antient ones; the poor Prophet, at laſt, muſt be counted but an Impoſtor, unleſs ſome Men now-a-days, like *Apollonius*, and others, in reſpect to the *Montaniſts*, could be kept from ſpeaking Evil of him *falſly*, or as it is in *Math.* v. 11. Ψευδομενοι, *Lying for Chriſt's ſake.*

The Sum of the Caſe is this, that God bearing Witneſs to the Prophets by the Diſtributions of the Holy Ghoſt, according *to his own Will*, as at large deſcrib'd in the Firſt Part of this Treatiſe, is a ſufficient Sign and Wonder, atteſting Prophecy; but if Men according to *their Will*, and every one ſeverally as he pleaſes, may put the Law upon the Holy Ghoſt, the Foundations of the Antient Faith are deſtroyed Put the Caſe of Miracle how ye pleaſe, what is Falſe by the Tenor of God's Word, cannot be made True by it; and what is True by the ſame Word of God, needs no Miracle to prove it ſo. The Scriptures dictated without any further Atteſtation than by Viſion, Voice, Dream, and Prophetick Inipiration, (which are all Miraculous) are as Valid, and of equal Authority with thoſe, which were at the Time of uttering, confirmed by other Miracles. Such Miracles as ye inſiſt on, are but more extrinſick Proofs of a Superior Agent, unleſs ye could define, as ye either can or will not, what may, or may not be within the Power of the Devil, by Divine Licenſe. Therefore, ſince the Working of Satan, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 9, 11. may be with *all Power, and Signs, and Lying Wonders* (tending to confirm a Lye, *Chryſoſt.*) *that they ſhould believe a Lye*; this Lye in the Text, is put in Oppoſition to ſome *Doctrinal Truth* manifeſted in his Prophetick Word; from which, in order *to ſeduce us*, Mark xiii. 22. *Falſe Chriſts and Prophets (as* Simon Magus, Menander, Marcus, Carpocrates) *ſhall ariſe, and ſhall ſhew Signs and Wonders, to ſeduce*, if it were poſſible, *even the Elect*: Therefore, being thus warned by our Redeemer, *Mat.* xxiv. 24. *That there ſhall ariſe Falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great Signs and Wonders*, inſomuch that if it were poſſible (but it is not) *they ſhall deceive* (πλανησαι, *make to err from Truth*) *the very Elect*; and being alſo caution'd by the Fathers of the Primitive Church, *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*, who were Witneſſes of Prophecy then exiſtent, to keep our Eye fixed upon the Mark of Doctrinal Truth, and not to take our Aim from Oſtentatious Miracles, in the Judgment of Propheſying, or of God Revealing; we do renounce your Teſt preſcribed, becauſe if we did allow of it, we muſt paſs a Sentence in Favour of the *Jews*, who embrued their Hands

Hands in the Blood of all the Prophets, whoſe Remains are our Standard. And we fear to be included in the Guilt and Puniſhment of that *Mother of Harlots*, on whom the ſtrong Lord that judgeth Her, ſhall avenge the Blood of his Servants the Apoſtles and Prophets, wherewith ſhe is found Drunk. Nevertheleſs, and altho' Miracles in the common acceptation, are not neceſſary at all, to the Exiſtence of true Propheſying, or for the Scriptural Proof of it; yet if ever God ſhall add to it, of his abounding Grace, the beneficial Gifts of Healing, and caſting out Devils; I cannot perceive from Scripture, but that the ſame ought to be acknowledged an evidential Sign of the *coming of Chriſt's Kingdom*, which we pray for, (as to come) by his Appointment; even a Kingdom, that cannot be ſhaken by the Prevalence of Antichriſt, as that hitherto has been; becauſe our Lord Himſelf makes the like Works evidential of his firſt coming, ſaying, *Mat.* xii. 28. *If I caſt out Devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you*; and again, *Luke* xi. 20. *If I with the Finger of God caſt out Devils*, no doubt *the Kingdom of God is come upon you.* In like manner alſo, He gave Commiſſion to the Seventy Diſciples, *Luke* x. 8, 9. *Into whatſoever City you enter, and they receive you, heal the Sick that are therein, and ſay unto them, the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*

DOCTRINE XVI.

Mat. vii. 15, 16, 18. Beware of falſe Prophets, which come to you in Sheeps Cloathing, but inwardly they are Ravening Wolves; ye ſhall know them by their Fruits; a good Tree cannot bring forth evil Fruit, neither can a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit. *Thus, when a Man pretends any Thing revealed from God, which he delivers to us in his Name, if his Life be vitious and corrupt, he is a falſe Prophet, and to be rejected. In reſpect to the ordinary Miniſters, the Caſe is otherwiſe; for beyond all Queſtion their Scandalous Lives, their Vices and Diſorders, do no ways hinder, but they are nevertheleſs true Miniſters; they ought to be liſtned to, for the Word of God loſes nothing of its Authority, tho' it paſſes ſometimes in them, thro' an impure Channel and Profane Mouth, your own Good, and a Principle of Charity, ſhould turn away your Eyes from the Faults of the Paſtors; for tho' they be as Hypocritical as the* Phariſees, *and as Profane as the* Scribes *(or* Sadducees*) they ſit in* Moſes *Chair, and the validity of their Miniſterial Office does not depend upon their Fruits,*

Fruits, their Morals. But Prophets may on the contrary, be Wolves in Sheeps Cloathing; *they may appear Grave, Modeſt and Mortified; nay,* tho' there appear nothing on them but what is virtuous, *it is not however ſufficient to believe them; for we find the true Prophets, to whom God revealed himſelf, were of as eminent Sanctification, as can be in this Life, wherein it is never perfect.*

Anſwer. 'Tis a rare Priviledge, that the Ordinary Miniſter has above the Extraordinary, by the Explanation of Scripture in this Manner! But becauſe Compariſons are difficultly handled, without Offence, I ſhall drop that Part of this Article, and inſiſt merely upon what concerns the Prophet without it. Now that the Model here given, is not Standard, even by the common Judgment of the Learned, concerning Prophetical Gifts, I take to be clear from the uſual and univerſally receiv'd Diſtinction between the Moral and Miraculous Graces; the former are called, *Gratiæ gratum facientes*, that is, ſuch Gifts of the Spirit as are ſanctifying and ſaving, by their effectual working in the Heart, as Faith, Hope, Charity, Purity, Humility; but the Miraculous Unctions or Graces, are called *Gratiæ gratis datæ*, ſuch as the Gifts of Tongues, Power of working Miracles, Healing, and the Gifts of Prophecy, which may be by an Angel; as to theſe latter, that of *Pſalms* lxviii. 18. affirms in general, that they were not to be always neceſſarily conjoined with the former, as the preſent Article affirms; for it is ſaid there, when our Lord aſcended, and received Gifts for Men, it was that He might (κατασκυνωσαι) *dwell in the Rebellious alſo*, as a thing is put into a Veſſel; for to that Metaphor the *Greek* word alludes.

Dr. *Hicks*'s *Spirit of Enthuſiaſm exorcis'd* ſays, " The Miraculous Gifts are not of a Moral kind, therefore they " did not ſanctify the Nature of the Perſon on whom " they were beſtowed, nor render'd him in the leaſt a better Chriſtian, or more acceptable to God than he was before: They were indeed often given to Sanctified Perſons, but not always ſo in the Primitive Times. For at " firſt, the Holy Ghoſt fell upon all that were Baptiz'd, as " *Theophylact* and *Chryſoſtom* acquaint us; (the Lord appear'd " to *Cain*, and ſeveral Heathen Kings, by Revelations.) " The Spirit of Prophecy was given to *Balaam*; The " Power of Working Signs and Wonders, and caſting out " Devils, was given to *Judas* as well as to the reſt of the " Apoſtles; and therefore ſaith our Saviour to this purpoſe, *Mat.* vii. 23. *Many will ſay unto me, in that Day,*

" *Lord!*

" *Lord! Lord! have we not Propheſyed in thy Name,* (by thy " Authority) *and in thy Name have done many wonderful Works?* " *and then will I profeſs unto you, I never knew you* (no more " than *Judas*) *depart from me ye Workers of Iniquity.* From " which Place it is evident, that Miraculous Gifts are ſo " far from transforming the ſinful Nature of Man, that if " they do not find us, they cannot make us Good.

To the ſame effect, is that of St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* xiii. *Tho' I ſpeak with Tongues, and tho' I have the gift of Prophecy, and underſtand all Myſteries, and all Knowledge, and tho' I have all Faith* (Miraculous) *ſo that I could remove Mountains, it profiteth me nothing*: Which clearly implies, that the Miraculous Gifts might be ſeparate from the Saving Graces, otherwiſe that powerful Diſcourſe, has no Force or Conſiſtency in it: Nay, the Apoſtle elſewhere hints, that it was poſſible he himſelf might be caſt away. And again, in *Luke* x. 20. our Lord warns the Seventy, *in this rejoice not, that the Devils are ſubject to you, but rather rejoice that your Names are written in Heaven*; but if the caſting out Devils in Chriſt's Name, were inſeparably annexed to luminous Sanctification, and ſo a certain Sign of their Salvation, there could be no need of the ſaid Caution or Admonition. And even concerning theſe Seventy, *Dorotheus* who lived before, and in the Time of *Conſtantine*, tells us, that *Phigellus*, *Hermogenes*, and *Demas*, were of the Number; yet St. *Paul* takes notice of them, that they had all turned away from him, *Demas* in particular, thro' the Love of this preſent World; concerning which laſt, *Dorotheus* adds, That he became an Idol Prieſt at *Theſſalonica*. Moreover, *Nicholas*, one of the Seven Deacons, full of the Holy Ghoſt, *Acts* vi. is ſuppoſed the Father afterwards, of the abominable *Nicholaitans*, *Rev.* ii.

The Paſſage mention'd above of *Chryſoſtom*, on the Epiſtle of *Paul* to the *Romans*, is thus, *God at the firſt*, ſays he, *gave unto all that were Baptized, various and divers Gifts, which the Apoſtle expreſſes by the term SPIRITS.* We have largely in the Firſt Part of this Treatiſe, under the Head of Prophecy proper, ſhew'd from the *Old* and *New Teſtament* both, that there is no way of Revelation, but what may be conveyed by God thro' the Inſtrumentality of an Angel, which is what *Chryſoſtom* takes notice of, referring to 1 *Cor.* xiv. 12. *ye are deſirous of Spirits*; and if ſo, we need not wonder that Sanctification does not neceſſarily and inſeparably attend it: Wherefore, upon the general remark of the firſt Baptized Chriſtians, let us obſerve that *Simon* the

Sorcerer ſaw ſomething, which viſibly denoted their receiving the Spirit; but how he ſhould ſee ſaving Grace conveyed to them, or that they were all neceſſarily ſaved, any more than *Judas* and *Demas*, does not appear.

Upon theſe Conſiderations, if Sanctifying and Saving Grace be not in it ſelf at all neceſſarily annexed to the Miraculous Gifts, we are excuſed from enquiring what Degree of Sanctification is ſufficient in a Prophet to have his Teſtimony credible, which poſſibly, would never be definable by the Advancers of this Opinion themſelves. But the Caution of our Saviour in the Text, againſt receiving *of Falſe Prophets*, ſuch as on whom nothing appears in their Life, but what is *Sheep's Cloathing*, ſeems to point us to quite another ſort of Trial; that is, that ſince a Prophet or Preacher by Inſpiration, muſt have upon him ſome Manifeſtation apparent of a Spirit, or elſe he cannot properly, (we think) be ſo much as a *Falſe Prophet*, it follows, that what we are to try, touching him, is, *That Spirit* appearing to be ſuperior to his own. Our Sovereign Prophet therefore, warning us, That Falſe Spirits may put on Sheep's Cloathing, in that Caſe, we are directed to turn our Eyes upon the Fruits of their Inſpiration, that is, the Tendency and Scheme of their Doctrine; ſo that our Examination then lies, in bringing to the Touchſtone, *viz.* the Law and Teſtimony Divine, thoſe Doctrinal Fruits proceeding off the Tree; for, as to Spirits Inſpiring, our Lawgiver has, in this very Text of *Mat.* vii. 15--18. preſcribed as a Deciſive and Concluſive Rule, *That a good Tree* (Spirit) *cannot bring forth Evil Fruit*, (Doctrine) *neither can a Corrupt Tree* (Spirit) *bring forth Good Fruit*, that is, Doctrine, Scripture Proof; for, as to *Sheep's Cloathing*, that is, appearing Godlineſs, the Text gives it them; and whoever dares in ſo Maſterly a Manner to judge his Brother for a Wolf, who has nothing appearing on him but what is Characteriſtick of a Sheep, as this Article does, I dare not. Now, that an *Evil Spirit*, in the Tendency and Tenor of Doctrine, ever did *bring forth Good Fruit*, by a Prophet, or Perſon Preaching by his Inſpiration, let Oppoſers produce but One Inſtance of, if they can; for our Lord's Words are poſitive, *That Men cannot gather Grapes of Thorns, and Figs of Thiſtles*; and this we are ſure of, that St. *Paul*, concurrently with our Saviour as above, does, concerning Spiritual Perſons or Miniſters, affirm, That *No Man can ſay, that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit*, 1 Cor. xii. 3. and St. *John* alſo directs us to determine by the ſame Rule, in the extenſive Senſe of 1 *John* iv. 1, 2, 3, 6.

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In the Primitive Church for several Ages, the Holy Ghost did extraordinarily appoint Overseers, and the Degree of Gifts Prophetical did constitute the most distinguishing Stations in the Churches; nevertheless, by the Apostolick Canons, even a Prophet was not capable of being a Bishop or Pastor, without the Moral Qualifications mention'd in the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*: But for Women, Children, or other Persons, uncapable of that Office, their speaking accidentally in Publick, under visible Manifestations of a Spirit, we have said enough to shew, That any Eminence in Holiness, was not *absolutely requisite* to denominate that Spirit to be Divine. However, if the Article here had asserted no more, than that a visible Sanctification was generally the Concomitant of the Spirit Prophetical, I dared not to have opposed my Sentiment, because the Prophets are commonly stiled Holy, and that I look upon them to enjoy the highest means of it; so that in respect to any other means, *it is impossible for those who were once enlightned, and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto Repentance*, Heb. vi. 4-6. We find also, the Prophets of the *New Testament* as well as the *Old*, set often as Examples unto others, and particularly of *Patience in suffering Afflictions*, *James* v. 10. *of Prayer*, in many Texts all over the Bible: Every where also they are signaliz'd for *Faith*, *Self-denial*, and *Humility*: On the contrary, the *False Prophets* are set out as the Reverse of all these, and especially in being *Proud*, *Heady*, *puffed up in their vain Mind*, *seeking the Applause of Men*, *Despisers of others*, and the like; but enlarging hereon, being not necessary here, we desist.

DOCTRINE XVII.

Actions *that become not a Man of Gravity*, cannot *come from the Spirit of God; for the true Prophet to appear in the Guise and Manner of a Man Distracted, is preposterous; for it's* absurd and inconceivable, *that Inspiration, or the prophetick Spirit, should transport him beyond the Rules of common Decency and right Reason, and dispose him to a wild frantick Behaviour, resembling Natural Distraction; and that the Prophet thro' Inspiration, should be determined to such a Carriage, as all sober Men esteem the Effects of a Distemper'd Imagination, is* absolutely irreconcileable to the Wisdom of God. *The*

Holy Spirit does not contradict common Senſe, *and that the Communications divine, form any Symptoms on the Perſon, which are common with thoſe, poſſeſs'd by an Evil Spirit,* is falſe. *Almighty God does ſubject his Revelation to our Trial and Judgment; having given us Faculties able to judge, whether* ſuch and ſuch Appearances be truly worthy of Him or not, *and our Reward lies in receiving as ſuch, only what appears to* our beſt Reaſon, *to be truly worthy of Him.*

Anſwer. The Miniſters of Chriſt, ought to hold faſt the Faithful Word as they have been taught, *Tit.* i. 9. and adhere to the Myſtery of the Faith, in a pure Conſcience, 1 *Tim.* iii. 9. but whether ye have not departed from the Law of Truth, and corrupted the Covenant of *Levi*, in this Matter, let the Text be Judge, and a Witneſs between us: And indeed ye appeal not to the Scripture, but againſt it to *Common Senſe*, and the prevailing Reaſon among Men, for your Supreme Rule and Judge; and doubtleſs the Natural Man, who cannot know the Things of the Spirit of God, will univerſally applaud you, altho', if Miniſters had performed their Duty in Teaching, the Common Senſe of Chriſtians muſt needs have been otherwiſe. But whoever turns back to the Rudiments of the World, the weak and beggarly Elements of vain Philoſophy, and would make them the Touchſtone of Things reveal'd, we cannot (by the Injunction of *Coll.* ii. 20. explained in the Introduction) eſteem of ſuch, other than vain Talkers and Deceivers; therefore, whatever your beſt Reaſon is, the beſt Reaſon of true Chriſtians ſtill, is always regulated by the Word of God, and whatever is there found, cannot but be truly worthy of Him; ſo that we are to take the Law from his Mouth, to inform us what is truly worthy of Him, and reconcileable to his Wiſdom, which is often (as in the Introduction hereof ſpecified) not to be meaſured, by THAT in Vogue among Men; for to do this, would be to the Encouragement of Deiſm openly. We take it for granted that there is Rational Proof ſufficient, that the Scripture is the Revelation of God, and as ſuch, ought to be owned for a Rule to ſquare your Axioms and Doctrines by; and then we leave this Matter ro be Decided by that Teſt, as at large inſiſted on in Part I. Chap. iv. And as in this Doctrine, ye have ſtudiouſly avoided to quote any Thing from the Written Word, ſo, until ye can diſprove our numerous Allegations from it there, That the Prophets (we all own for Divine) were extravagant in their Actions

and

and Deportment under the Spirit of Prophecy, we cannot think otherwiſe, than that by the Concluſions of this Article, ye have laid down your Cloaths, and bear Witneſs for your ſelves, that ye are the Children of them that ſtoned the Prophets.

In the minute Diſcuſſion of this Matter, in the Firſt Part, we have (without Building on it) produced many Citations, from the moſt eſteem'd Collection of Criticks, which do allow that the Divine Spirit did form on the Prophets, ſome Symptoms like to thoſe Poſſeſs'd by an Evil One; we have indeed omitted to cite there the Names of Modern Divines, who concur in allowing the plain Senſe of the Sacred Text; and we ſuppoſe, that if St. *Paul* had no Authority againſt the Truth, and only in Behalf of it, we ought not implicitly to ſubject our ſelves to Perſons, who do allow themſelves to have among them poſſibly, ſome as Profane as the *Sadducees*, who believ'd neither Angel or Spirit. Nevertheleſs, we could here heap up a Number of Modern Names, acknowledging the ſame Things for Divine Truth, which is in this Article ſaid to be, *Falſe, Abſurd, Inconceivable, abſolutely Irreconcileable to the Wiſdom of God, and impoſſible to be from Him.* But to avoid Prolixity, and a needleſs incumbring of the Argument, we content our ſelves to mention here, only Mr. *Wilſon's Compleat Chriſtian Dictionary*; where we find under the Word PROPHECY, "That a Prophet is called προφήτης, *one to whom the O-*"*racle ſpeaks*; and that to Propheſy, is ſometimes ſet to ſig-"nify a wild raving Behaviour or Speaking, ſuch as the "ἐνθεοι, or *Enthuſiaſts* among the Heathen, Men poſſeſs'd "with Devils, or Diabolical Furies, were wont to uſe; and "the Reaſon of this is clear from 1 *Sam.* xviii. 12. be-"cauſe Prophets did ordinarily both ſpeak and act in a "Manner, far diſtant and remote from the ordinary "Practice of other Men; they uſed ſtrange Language, "ſtrange Motions and Agitations of the Body, and ac-"cordingly were by many that looked on them, thought to "be mad, 2 *Kings* ix. 11.

If our Ears could be open to the Oracles of Reaſon, as ſuperior to, and Judge over Revelation, we ſhould be in the greateſt Danger, on this Head of Propherick Signs, Extacies, and Agitations; and therefore we ſtick faſt to the Text, and will run the venture of having this Courſe cenſured, as it was upon the *Montaniſts* by the primitive Fathers of the *Free-Thinkers*, for the principal Cauſe of their Deluſion; becauſe we find, that theſe fine Declamations of

appealing to Reaſon and common Senſe, are the ſole Refuge of all Infidels in our Days; and thus the *Conference with a Deiſt*, repreſents him in Part iii. Page 149. ſaying, "For our Saviour to ride upon ſuch an odd ſort of a Beaſt, "at the Head of a Mob, was an Action not becoming a "wiſe or grave Man, much leſs the Son of God; and it "looks like an intollerable Affectation of Popularity, to "ſuffer the Rabble to *Hoſannah* Him all along upon the "Road, and to throw their Doublets in the Way, to grace "the Triumph. What could we think of it, but a great "Vanity, or Enthuſiaſm? *To which Dr.* Nicholls *anſwers*, "Our Lord was pleaſed to make Uſe of this mean ſort of "Triumph, as a kind of *Hieroglyphical Repreſentation* of the "Humility which his Religion taught, and which by this, "(as well as *the Sign* uſed of waſhing the Diſciples Feet,) "He recommended to them; for this was the uſual "Way of the *Eaſtern* People to repreſent Things by, as ap-"pears in *Micaiah* his *Puſhing with Horns*, and *Ezekiel's boyl-"ing the Pot.*"

But as to the main Caſe, of the raving Behaviour, the ſtrange Motions, Agitations, and extravagant Manner of the Prophets, having already ſaid ſo much upon occaſion of the *Montaniſts* in Part II. and concerning the Scriptural Deſcription of Prophets, in Part I. I ſhall here add no more, than that the ſame is not aſcribable to the Cuſtom of any *Eaſtern* People; becauſe if there had been nothing upon them, but what was cuſtomary, in the Age and Places, wherein they ſo propheſyed, we ſee not why *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, and the *Pſalmiſt*, ſhould complain of being in Deriſion, of being expoſed and made hateful, as on this Account it appears, in Part I. they were. If his Behaviour had nothing of odd and phantaſtical, how came the Young Man ſent to *Jehu*, to be termed a Mad-fellow, by thoſe who only ſaw it? Beſides, we find the general Caſe of the Prophets, in *Hoſea* ix. 7. *Jer.* xxix. 26. is expreſſed by Madneſs, and even our Saviour is taxed with ſome Appearances of Madneſs, *John* x. 10. Wherefore, we look upon the Scripture Teſtimony, as fixed for a general Standard, in this Point, as much as any other, for the Trial of Prophets of all Ages and Countries; altho', the adhering to the Sacred Record, may prove dangerous to any Man's Reputation, for by the Marginal reading of *Iſaiah* lix. 15. *Truth faileth, and he that departeth from Evil, is accounted mad.*

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DOCTRINE XVIII.

God is the God of Order, not of Confusion; and He certainly allows us to be Judges of Order and Regularity; and this is in force upon all Prophets, as the Rule of their Speaking and Propheſying.

Anſwer. We read of a horrible Thing in the antient *Iſrael*, that *the Prophets propheſyed falſly, and the Prieſts bore Rule by their means, and that the People lov'd to have it ſo*, Jer. v. 31. And in *Chap.* xxix. 24. one of this ſort, *Shemaiah* the Dreamer, complemented the Prieſts with a general Commiſſion over every Man that is mad, and maketh himſelf a Prophet. But unleſs it lie in theſe Texts, I know of no Authority in the Church that is ſet over the Prophets; and that what is Human, ſhould preſcribe to the Divine, I ſuppoſe none will pretend. We have ſeen at large, that the Churches of Chriſt, for ſome Ages, preſcribed no Rules which hindred any Perſon in the Congregation, on whomſoever the Spirit fell, from Singing of *Inſpired Hymns*, Expounding the Scriptures, and Conſecrating the Elements. Particularly as to the firſt of theſe, *Origen de Orat. Sect. 6. p. 7.* ſpeaking of the then Publick Worſhip, ſays, *That without the Spirit's immediate Influence, it was not poſſible to ſing the Praiſe of God, either in Good Rhime, Tune, Metre, or Harmony*, which doubtleſs would be diſallowed by the Modern Judges of common Decency. But as to thoſe, who now pretend to be conſtituted Judges of Order and Regularity, they have under the foregoing Article told us, That the Infinite Being does ſubject his Revelation to their Judgment and Faculties, to determine whether ſuch and ſuch Appearances be truly worthy of Him or not; and according to their beſt Reaſon, they have there concluded already, That any Thing, in the Behaviour and Manner of the Prophet, which is beyond the Rules of *common Decency*, and which does contradict *Senſus communis*, the *common Senſe* of the Age and Place, however profane upon this Subject, and which would not become a Man of Gravity, cannot be from God, and is abſolutely irreconcilable to Him: Wherefore, ſince it has appear'd, beyond any poſſible Confutation, in Part I. that the Holy Text throughout, does aſſert the Prophet to be One, agitated by a Spirit, and oftentimes appearing in his Behaviour and outward Manner, very wide from the Rules of common Decency, and unbecoming a Man of Gravity; ſo that from the outward Appearance on him, he was uſually ac-

adjudged to be mad; thoſe then who will determine by, and from outward Forms and Seemlineſs, would have adhered to the *Boaſters in Appearance*, againſt the Apoſtle, who grants that he was beſides himſelf at Times, 2 *Cor.* v. 12, 13. Nay, Men that look chiefly at the outſide Face of Things, might very well have choſen the *Phariſee* for their Leader and Guide, rather than our Lord, who had no Form nor Comlineſs, nor any thing to be ſeen upon Him, that could recommend Him to Beholders. And yet further, ſuch ſort of Judges as theſe, would have deſpiſed, rejected, and have hid their Faces, or been aſhamed of their Redeemer, when by his Friends as well as Enemies, he was ſaid to be mad. If therefore, Men will not liſten to, or hear *Moſes* and the Prophets, Chriſt and his Apoſtles, nor permit the Law and Teſtimony to ſtand for any Thing, in this Point; there is little Ground to expect, from ſuch Principles as are mention'd above, touching theſe Things, any Rules of Order, but what will violate the Apoſtolick Conſtitution of the Prophets ſpeaking Two or Three in an Aſſembly. Nevertheleſs, whatever Regulations are allowable, without Infringment of the Liberty of Propheſyings, according to the Tenor of the Divine Legiſlature, they ought to take Place, that all Things may be done, as far as the Thing admits, decently and in Order; for God is not the Author of Confuſion and Tumult when the Prophet ſpeaks, but of Peace in all the Churches of the Saints.

In this Article, and in all the reſt wherein *the Clergy* are either expreſſed or implied, to hold Principles unjuſtifiable touching the Spirit of Prophecy; *the Word* in this Treatiſe is not limited to thoſe of the Church of *England*, but is intended to comprehend the Teachers, Speakers, and Miniſters of all ſeparate Communities; and there ought to be no kind of Reflection made by the Reader upon one Party of Chriſtians more than another, becauſe even the very Principles I have cited, which appear correſpondent with thoſe of Infidels in all Revelation, are drawn from the Sermons of Diſſenting Miniſters and their Writings, as well as from thoſe of the Church. So likewiſe, in the other Doctrinal Errors upon this Subject, mention'd already and here following, the Diſcerner of the ſecret Intents of the Heart knows, that the Author hereof does not affix them unto any one Community of Chriſtians more than other. In particular therefore, as to the preſent Article, he knows of no Society of Religion, from the *Papiſts* to the *Quakers*, by

but wherein the Miniſtry or ſtated Elderſhip, do claim to be Judges of Order, and to impoſe ſuch Rules of it, that thereby a Propher, according to the Scriptural Definition is neceſſarily debarr'd to Propheſy. Addreſſing here therefore, to all of them indifferently, it is ſufficient to ſay, that Order and Decency are comely Things, and in their proper Place ought to be conſulted; and I only wiſh they may not be uſed as fine Coverings for an Enmity to the prophetick Voice of the Lord; for thoſe, who in regulating the Primitive Chriſtian Aſſemblies, ſaid to the Rich Man, *ſit thou here in a ſeemly Place*, (καλως) and to the Poor, *ſtand thou there, or ſit here under my Footſtool*, wanted not the Pretence of Order and Decency for ſo doing; and yet, they are ſeverely rebuked for this Decency of Reſpect, *James* ii. 1-------9. and they are ſaid to be therein, *Judges of* (or from) *evil reaſonings*, (διαλογισμων) *and to judge wrong in themſelves*, (διακριθητε) but whether in reſpect to a Prophet, all ſtated Miniſters are not partial in themſelves, I leave to God and their own Conſciences.

DOCTRINE XIX.

If Viſions be of difficult Explication, that is ſufficient Reaſon to reject them.

Anſwer. That Scripture Viſions were often not fully underſtood, by thoſe who ſaw them, has been made appear in Part I. Chap. 4. Sect. 18. 21. And that thoſe of *Ezekiel*, St. *John*, *Daniel*, and *Zechariah*, are to this Day of very difficult Explication, I believe the Venters of this Doctrine will not deny. The Primitive Chriſtians had among them an Opinion generally prevailing, that no Prophecy of Scripture could be certainly interpreted by human Abilities, and therefore they highly valued the Preſence of the Spirit, to interpret the deep Things of God, and give the Senſe of former Revelations clearly; for where any Doubt ariſes, about the Meaning of a former Law among Men, it is a Prerogative reſerved in the Legiſlator only, to explain the ſame concluſively. I remember, that Dr. *Stanhope* in his Sermons at Mr. *Boyle*'s Lecture, obſerves upon 2 *Pet.* i. 19. that *the Word of Prophecy being a Light that ſhineth in a dark Place, until the Day dawn*, is to be taken to refer to the Time of our Lord's bright Manifeſtation to come for the the clearing it. Thus it is, that after the Spirit of Chriſt in them, had teſtified of the Sufferings and enſuing Glory of Chriſt, yet the Prophets themſelves did enquire and ſearch diligently, into the Signification of thoſe

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Predictions, 1 *Pet.* i. 10, 11. Thus alſo, after the Converſion of the *Epheſians* to Chriſtianity, the Apoſtle prays, that the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation might be given them, for the clear Knowledge of God, *Chap* i. 17. We are often in ſacred Writ taught by Parables, and Allegories, and put in Mind of the Wiſdom of God in a Myſtery, even hidden Wiſdom; and Miniſters in particular, are charged to hold faſt the *Myſtery of Faith*, and admoniſhed not to wreſt Things, which are hard to be underſtood: From what Fountain therefore, Men have drawn this ſort of Divinity, will poſſibly be evident from the Reaſoning and Philoſophy, of the Rejectors of Chriſtianity it ſelf.

Conf. with a *Deiſt*, in Part Third and Fourth, repreſents him thus ſpeaking; "The Obſcurity of Scripture is "a great Argument againſt the Divinity of it; for, the "Want of Perſpecuity is the moſt intollerable Fault, which "any Author can be guilty of, becauſe the very End and "Deſign of Writing, is to be underſtood. Had therefore "God been pleas'd, to have made ſuch a Revelation, he "would undoubtedly have done it with all imaginable "Plainneſs; but it looks like a Banter upon Mankind, for "God to give out that for a Revelation of Himſelf, which "is wrapp'd up in the darkeſt and moſt inacceſſible Clouds. "But for Proof of this profound Darkneſs in the Scriptu-"ral Books, we need only to appeal to the Collection of "Criticks. Moreover, to ſpeak by Parables, eſpecially "when it is aſſerted, that it was purpoſely done, to the "End that the *Jews* might not underſtand it, is a very "odd Way of ſignifying Things. Further alſo, there are "ſeveral Texts quoted for Predictions, which are as veiled, "as dark myſterious Riddles: Now if God Almighty had "given Mankind a previous Knowledge of thoſe Things "He would not have wrapp'd up the Matter, in obſcure "enigmatical Veils, like the Heathen Oracles; but would "have ſet them down in Words at length, plainly and ex-"preſſing the Facts; for this would have been more agree-"able, to the Simplicity and Veracity of God.

Unto which preſumptious and arrogant Way of arguing, Dr. *Nicholls* anſwers; "The Obſcurity of ſome Places in "the Scriptures, is ſo far from being a Fault, that it is a "peculiar Excellency in them, and an Inſtance of the "Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, in ordering them to be "compoſed in that Manner. It is highly requiſite, that "the prophetical Parts of Scripture ſhould be ſomewhat "obſcure, and ſhould be plainly intelligible only after the

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" Completion; for, it is not without manifeſt Wiſdom " deſigned, that ſome Paſſages ſhould be very difficult " and obſcure, to raiſe in Men a ſacred Awe and Venera- " tion for theſe Books, which would be more generally " wanting in Men, if they were wrote with the bright Per- " ſpecuity of other common Authors. By this Obſcurity " therefore, God Almighty teaches us Humility, and puts " us in Mind of the Shallowneſs of our Underſtandings, " and ſhews us that it is owing to his good Will and Plea- " ſure that we have any Knowledge at all of Divine Truths; " that He reveals to us juſt as much as He pleaſes, and at " his Will veils over the reſt with Darkneſs. But by the " ſame Difficulties, He gives us an Opportunity of exerci- " ſing our Diligence, in theſe ſacred Matters; for other- " wiſe Men would be more lazy, in the Buſineſs of their " Salvation; nor would the Divine Truths be ſo ſtrongly " imprinted upon their Minds, as when ſome of them with " ſo much Difficulty and Study, are to be found out in " the Scripture."

Upon the whole Matter, it ſeems to us, that the eſſential Difference between the *Deiſt* and the Chriſtian, is, that the former does not think himſelf obliged to believe any Thing further then he can comprehend it, and with ſuch an one the Authority of Revelation ſtands for nothing. On the other Side, the Chriſtian when he finds Reaſon ſufficient, to conclude a Thing to be revealed from God, he admits the ſame without further Debate. And thus it is, that in Reſpect to the Trinity, the late Biſhop of *Bath* and *Wells*, in his Demonſtration of the Meſſias, Part iii. *p.* 447. tells us, *there are many Things we have Reaſon to believe, which yet we have not Ability to comprehend.* Thus alſo, the ſame reverend Author, Part ii. *p.* 323. does confeſs that the Difficulty is great to reconcile the Genealogies of our Saviour, given us ſo differently in *Matthew* and *Luke*; but then ſays he, " we have not ſufficient Cauſe to queſtion the Truth " of the Chriſtian Religion, becauſe of theſe Difficulties: " They are very weak and fooliſh Men, who will renounce " the whole Religion, becauſe there are ſome Things ſaid " and taught in it, which they are not able to comprehend, " or give an Account of. There are many Difficulties in " the Old Teſtament, and ſeeming Contradictions to be " found, eſpecially in Matters of Names and Numbers; but " it is unreaſonable to doubt of the whole, becauſe a Man " is not able to give a clear Account of thoſe difficult " Paſſages, which are found therein. Thus when we are

" urged

" urged with the different Accounts, given by the Evan-
" geliſts of our Lord's Lineage, and put upon reconciling
" of them; I appeal to any indifferent Perſon, whether it
" be likely, that *Matthew* and *Luke* ſhould in the Beginning
" of their Relations, ſay that which would overthrow the
" Credit of the whole. They may differ in their Account;
" but 'tis not credible they ſhould contradict one another;
" it may be difficult to reconcile them, but 'tis incredible
" that they ſhould ſay any Thing, that does ſubvert the
" Credit of the whole."

Upon theſe Hints, with others in our Introduction, it appears ſufficiently, that both Viſions and Prophecy in Scripture are frequently of difficult Explication, or hard to be underſtood; and doubtleſs were rather more ſo in the Ages they were deliver'd, than after ſo long a Chain of Providence to help the Expoſition now. Glorified therefore be the Mercy of God to his Church, that the infidel Doctrine in this Article of rejecting them on that Account, has not prevailed. The primitive Ages of Chriſtianity, argued from the Obſcurity and Difficulties of Scripture, an abſolute Neceſſity of the prophetick Spirit, for giving the Senſe thereof clearly, and I find no Argument ſufficient to refute that Opinion. This then we may conclude at leaſt, that the ſacred Text being left as a Standard, to all other ſucceeding Prophecy and Viſion, ſuch as are of difficult Explication, the Latter no more than the Former ought therefore to be rejected.

DOCTRINE XX.

Threatning of Judgments upon Oppoſers, argues a malicious Spirit, and therefore cannot *be of God.*

Anſwer. As to Oppoſers in general, of the Word of the Lord in the Prophet, Men certainly muſt deny a great Part of the Scripture, if the Spirit threatning Judgments upon them, could not be of God; and we have inſtanced already, that the Rejecters of Chriſtianity do object to the Divinity of the ſacred Records, even upon this Foot. We are ſorry therefore, that the Teachers of the Word, ſhould thus ſtrengthen the Hands of Infidelity, tho' hereby they have given us Occaſion to ſearch more heedfully into that Word of the Lord on Record. But certainly, be it who will, that advances this Doctrine, and lays it as a general Rule, they do therein blaſpheme againſt the Holy Ghoſt, who has all along in the Prophets, threatned Judgments, upon Oppoſers of him: And we find in particular, that *Jeremiah,*

remiah, in *Chap.* xi. 14. and again xiv. 11. was positively commanded of God, not to pray for such, against whom the Lord had denounced Judgments by him. And as to Denunciations personal, the same Prophet by Command of the Lord does it, in *Chap.* xx. upon *Pashur*, in *Chap.* xxii. upon *Shallum*, *Jehojakim* and *Coniah*, in *Chap.* xxviii. upon *Hananiah*, in *Chap.* xxix. upon *Ahab*, *Zedekiah*, and *Shemaiah*, in *Chap.* xxxvi. upon King *Jehojakim*, his own dread Sovereign, in *Chap.* xlii. upon *Johanan*. These, one would think might suffice, and 'tis strange, that Gospel-Ministers could overlook them all; but there may a great many more Instances of personal Denunciations be found, (as in *Isa.* xxii. 15-19. and elsewhere) which the Prophet was forced to deliver, whether he would or no; all which came from the Spirit of Prophecy undoubtedly Divine. Even in the New Testament also, the Case of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, the Threatning to *Simon* at *Samaria*, to *Elymas*, and to the Highpriest *Ananias*, and to *Diotrephes* by St. *John*, and those to whom St. *Paul* speaks of his coming with a Rod; all these, with our Saviour's driving out of the Temple the Merchants and Bankers, with their Lumber, might be reducible to the same Head; and I hope, those who so often commend the *BEREANS*, and recomend them to our Imitation, will of themselves reflect further upon these Matters, and never any more upon this Subject, need to be put in Mind of their Opposition to the Scripture, by one of the Laity.

DOCTRINE XXI.

Most of the Prophets were learned Men; the Art and Elogancy of David's *Poems, shew that they were composed with Care and Study, to which the Blessing of Inspiration was added, as a Reward upon his devout Labours. The same must be said of all* the more perfect *Prophets, as* Moses, *the Authors of* Judges *and* Ruth, Samuel, *the Authors of the* Kings, Chronicles, *and* Esther; Nehemiah, Ezra, Job, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, *and most, if not all, the minor Prophets, wrote in this same reasonable Way, with the Help of Study and Learning, as well as Inspiration.*

Answer. 2 *Tim.* iii. 16. *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God*, therefore no Part of it was composed, by the Study and devout Labours of Men; and thus, 2 *Pet.* i. 21, *Prophecy comes, or came not at any Time by the Will of Man*; but Study and Labour implies the Will of Man; and so here are two counter Assertions, the one by a modern Stu

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dent in Divinity, the other by an inſpir'd Fiſherman. Surely, our Miniſters do not duly reflect, that whilſt they ſo frequently contradict the Scripture, they do thereby oppoſe and withſtand the Holy Ghoſt, after ſo daring a Manner, that it is impoſſible under that Temper, that they ſhould do otherwiſe than the *Jews* of old, by the living Prophets, whenever God ſends ſuch. What Chriſtian *Heart* can ceaſe on this Occaſion, from mourning for them! they may be cenſorious without Mercy if they pleaſe, upon the poor Enthuſiaſt; but the Witneſs of all Things knows, that no Sorrow ever affected *that* of the Writer hereof, like unto the Contempt of the Scriptures on their Part, as it is numerouſly inſtanced in this Treatiſe; for herein, we have a Diſtinction of ſome Prophets *more perfect*, or perfectly inſpir'd, than others; which naturally leads Men into an Enquiry, which would not be eaſily decided, and which muſt draw very ſad Conſequences, upon ſome or other Parts of the Scripture, eſpecially the New Teſtament Writings, which were indicted by the unlearned. And beſides, as the Scripture is for the moſt Part, a Tranſcript of what was ſpoken, or what was ſeen by the Prophet, under the Spirit's immediate Influence; human Study and Learning cannot be allowed any Share therein, without the utmoſt Danger to the Authority of the Act of God inſtantaneouſly revealing, and even to the Nature of Revelation it ſelf. We cannot therefore permit here much amplifying upon a Point ſo tender. But it ſhall ſuffice to ſay, that as to the Poems of *David*, compoſed with Care and Study, his dying Words tell us, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 2, 3. *The God of Iſrael ſpake to him, the Spirit of the Lord ſpake by him, and the Word of God was in his Tongue*, which is a very different Account, from his compoſing them with Labour, Care and Study. Moreover, the Title affixed to moſt of thoſe Pſalms from the *Greek*, *viz. a Pſalm of David*, Ψαλμος τω Δαυιδ, is properly *a Pſalm to David*, which intimates that they were by the Spirit of the Lord given unto him, for the Uſe and Benefit of the Church, and were not at all his Compoſure. If any among the Writers of the New Teſtament was learned, we conceive that it muſt have been St. *Paul*; but that he did not ſpeak or write, from any Compoſition of his own Labour and Study, appears from 1 *Cor.* ii. 13. *Which Things we ſpeak, not in the Words which Mans*, (no not our own) *Wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth.* Moreover, the Command of our Saviour was poſitive, not to take previous Thought or Care, much leſs Study, what they

they ſhould ſay, ſeeing it was not they who were to ſpeak, but the Spirit of God by them; and therefore the moſt illiterate and ignorant might be prophetically inſpir'd to teach. Beſides all this, the Tenor of Scripture Prophecy being a Declaration on God's Part, and from Him, I cannot ſee how it is poſſible to have been, in any Part thereof dictated by human Study, without the fouleſt Impoſture on the Prophet's Part. The Holy Spirit, in ſerving Himſelf of the various Styles and Abilities of the Men He inſpir'd, did however ſpeak by them, and not they from themſelves; and as to the Word of God written which we uſually call Scripture, when it is affirmed to have been *given by Inſpiration of God*, I take it to be imply'd, that the ſame was ſpoken under Inſpiration, inſtantaneouſly then given of God; becauſe the Word, *Inſpiration* alludes properly to the Breath, that forms Speech. However this Caſe of writing the Word of God was, we are now treating upon a Doctrine, that allows a great deal to the Learning, Study, Care and Compoſition of the Prophet himſelf, and thereby grants a Mixture of the human. So that, upon ſuch like Tenets, which ſeemd to imply that an ignorant Man cannot be inſpir'd, I am wholly at a Loſs to know, how our Divines could have ſeparated and diſtinguiſhed that which was ſimply and only the Word of God, from what was compoſed or compounded with the Care and Study of the Man, and conveyed with ſome Tincture of his Style and Abilities; for we are aſſured, they would not have ſubmitted to an Inſpiration, thus deſcribed by themſelves. The Apoſtle *Paul* and *Timothy* tell us, 2 *Cor.* ii. 17. We are not as many which *corrupt* (καπηλευοντες, mix, as the Vintner his Wines) *the Word of God*, but as of Sincerity, but as of God, *in the Sight of God ſpeak we in Chriſt*, and the Conſcience of this is ſufficient to the Prophet himſelf; nevertheleſs, how others without the miraculous Gift of Diſcernment, could know aſſuredly, that there was no Mixture on the Prophet's Part, while ſpeaking, I ſhould be very glad, that the Learned would explain to us. In the mean time, as the written Word does abſolutely require that we ought in Caſe of a heavenly Voice to believe the Prophet's hearing it, and in that of a Viſion, that we ſhould believe his ſeeing it; ſo in the Point of Prophetick Inſpiration (wherein there are ſome Signs or Manifeſtation viſible to our ſelves) we have no leſs Reaſon to believe him ſpeaking, by the Word of the Lord, or Power operating on him ſupernaturally; when he aſſerts, his own Sincerity, as *Paul* did.

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DOCTRINE XXII.

It is an Affectation of Tyranny over the Underſtandings of Men, to enforce a Belief upon Perſons, to whom they propoſe their Doctrines, by endeavouring to make them believe they have ſuch immediate Inſpirations, as the Prophets and Apoſtles had: So as not to hearken to them, and not to believe them, is all one, as not to hearken to God, nor believe him. Such Inſpirations are not to affect other People, unleſs God gives to the Inſpir'd Perſon, at the ſame Time, means to convince them of the Truth of what he affirms. For Example, for an Inſpiration to ſay, ſuch and ſuch is the meaning of a former Scripture, without it enable them to make it out, is gratis dictum. *This is to require a blind Submiſſion to its Authority.*

Anſwer. We have already elſewhere inſiſted upon it, that there was a Difference in the Clearneſs of Divine Manifeſtation under the Law; that of *Moſes* being termed God's ſpeaking to him *Face to Face*, and that equally true ſpeaking of God to other Prophets, was comparatively *in dark Speeches*, *Numb.* xii. 6--8. In like manner, in the New Teſtament, we find mention of *the very chiefeſt Apoſtles*, with whom the great Number of thoſe, who went every where preaching the Word, even ſuch as *Ananias* and *Agabus* could not ſtand in Competition, any more than the numerous Prophets, reſidentiary in the ſeveral Churches. Thus therefore, the Prophetical Writings of the Old Teſtament, being ſtampt anew with the Seal of our Saviour's Authority, and thoſe of the New Teſtament now ſubſiſting, with That of the chiefeſt Apoſtles; theſe Scripture Prophecyings of the Text, are allowed juſtly the Prerogative of being the Standard, by which all ſubſequent Inſpiration is to be tried, and to which Trial it ought to appeal; and the Authority of theſe is not controllable by any leſs clear and powerful Exertions of the ſame Spirit, in whatſoever Age we enjoy the Manifeſtation of it.

Upon theſe Terms, the Preachings extemporary, and unwritten, of the Apoſtles and Prophets concurrent with them in the Chriſtian Church, cannot be judged other than Divine Inſpirations, tho' all their Sermons were not to be perpetuated, as univerſal Laws to the Church in all Ages. So alſo, the Inſpiration of Prophets, in ſeveral Ages after the Apoſtles, as at large proved in the Second and Third Parts, was equally from one and the ſame Spirit; and thoſe who enjoyed their Miniſtry, were taught immediately of God, and not by Men like themſelves; but now, for Miniſters

ſters to ſay, as by this Article, that immediate Inſpiration is a Tyranny over the Underſtandings of Men, is to concur in, and warrant the Maxims or Principles, upon which the Scoffers at all reveal'd Religion, do pretend to juſtify themſelves. Indeed, it is a lamentable Conſideration, to find by ſeveral of the Doctrines herein mention'd, how much Encouragement, *Sadduciſm* and Infidelity of God revealing, has found from the Tenets of the Clergy, even ever ſince *Apollinaris*, down to this Day. And thus the *Conference with a Deiſt* repreſents him ſaying in the Third and Fourth Parts; "In the Scripture Way of commanding "Things there is no rational Account of thoſe moral Du- "ties, but all theſe Rules are to be taken upon the Word "of the Speaker, ſo that we are put of with a *Thus ſaith* "*the Lord*, or an *I ſay unto you*, inſtead of proving the Ob- "ligations we lie under to thoſe Moralities; wherefore no "ſenſible Man can rationally be taken with ſuch Lectures. "Now *Plato* and *Tully* prove their Moralities, by deducing "them from general and uncontroverted Principles, from "the eternal Rules of Juſtice, from the Rectitude and Ho- "nourableneſs of Vertue, and the Pravity and Turpitude "of Vice; ſo that when I read a Piece of *Cicero*'s Morality, "I cannot but be in Love with the Duties he recomends, "he makes them to be ſo agreeable to my Reaſon, ſo con- "formable to my Nature, or my State and Condition in "the World, that methinks I am charmed into the Practice "of them, whether I will or no. Such Authors ſhew me "ſo much beautiful Order and Harmony, and Agreeable- "neſs with the Laws of Nature in every Vertue, ſuch an "ugly Unproportionableneſs in Vice, ſuch an Incongruity "with, and Diſturbance to Nature, as makes in the Eyes "of every rational Man, the one to look lovely and de- "lightful, the other monſtrous and abominable. But the "ſcriptural Writers I cannot be perſwaded were inſpired "of God, becauſe they were not Maſters of this noble "Quality; for tho' they honeſtly enough tell Men what "they ſhould do, yet they give them *no Reaſon* for it, ſo "that in many Parts of the Scripture, that deſirable Thing "called *good Reaſoning* I find wanting; and tho' Men ſhould "be really convinced of their Duty by the Scripture, yet "bare Authority can never have that Influence upon their "Lives as a rational Perſwaſion.

In the Introduction we have more largely ſhew'd (than is proper here) that the Way of the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, has not generally been adapted to human Wiſdom,

nor uſed Eloquence of Speech, or the Artificial Way of Reaſoning, commonly eſteem'd; but on the contrary, has choſen to uſe the Things, which by the World's admired Wiſdom, are accounted, *fooliſh, weak, baſe, deſpiſed and nothing worth.* Wherefore, when the Holy Ghoſt gives a Charge univerſal to Believers, touching *Propheſyings*, not to *deſpiſe*, or (by the *Greek*) eſteem them nothing worth, He therein does intimate, there was ſomething attending Prophecy, which would tempt the Pride of Men, to trample it under their Feet. Seeing then that our Calling in Chriſt, and the very Foundations of Faith, require that we ſhould take the Word inſpir'd, upon the Manifeſtation of the Spirit juſtified by the Harmony of Scripture; it is a very ſmall Matter to be condemn'd therein, by Man's Judgment, which is regulated by quite another Principle. Let the Mockers therefore go on, at their Peril! We muſt adhere to the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God, among which (beſides all that has been at large already ſaid, touching the Obligation of Reverence due to the Spirit of Prophecy) we read thus, in *Heb.* xii. 25. *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh*, (who liveth, and ſpeaketh when he pleaſes) *for if they* (even the Jews) *eſcaped not, who refuſed him that ſpake on Earth, much more ſhall not we* (Chriſtians) *eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven.* For it is written *Rev.* xix. 11--16. He whoſe Name is, the Word of God, at the Head of the Armies of Heaven, *ſhall judge in Righteouſneſs and make War, He ſhall ſmite the Nations with a ſharp Sword out of his Mouth, He ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron, and He ſhall tread the Wine-preſs of the Fierceneſs and Wrath of Almighty God.*

As to the Infidel Aſſertion, that it is but *gratis dictum* for the Spirit of Prophecy to ſay, ſuch and ſuch is the Meaning of a former Scripture, unleſs it be made out by rational Means of Demonſtration; we have in the Introduction ſhew'd, that to receive any Thing, as it ſtands proved by natural Reaſon, and only when it is ſo, is not at all to receive it as reveal'd: But for the Expoſition of Scripture, it belongs ſo peculiarly to the Gift of Propheſying, that the earlieſt Ages of Chriſtianity held it generally for a Rule, that many obſcure Parts of the Text, were not poſſible to be expounded, but by the ſame Spirit which indicted it. The Books of *Barnabas*, *Clemens*, and *Hermas*, which were allowed among the New Teſtament Writings, do give Inſtances of Prophetick Expoſition; and I have in the Second Part of this Treatiſe produced Proof from Dr. *Hicks*,

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of ſeveral other Scripture Interpretations, which were receiv'd univerſally by the antient Church, from Prophets after the Age Apoſtolical. When therefore we ſhall pay the Homage due from our Underſtandings unto God, by ſubmiting to the Spirit of Prophecy, interpreting the Scripture, who by an immediate Act of his own, can convince of the Truth of what He affirms, and open our Underſtandings to know the Scripture; we think, we walk in the Way of God's Statutes and Commandments, by multiplied Citations already inſtanced, and are ſafer therein, than in truſting to confuſed and diſagreeing Comments, and unſcriptural Precepts of the Learned, here mention'd.

DOCTRINE XXIII.

It cannot be properly ſaid that a Man is immediately inſtructed by the Spirit, when the Spirit makes uſe of the Word or outward Teaching, as a means of Information, Comfort or Support.

Anſwer. The Teachers hereof, are deſired to compare this with Doctrine XXI. becauſe they ſeem inconſiſting; but to build upon the Text, that ſaith, *He that propheſyeth, ſpeaketh unto Men to Edification, and Exhortation and Comfort, and he that propheſyeth, edifieth the Church,* 1 *Cor.* xiv. 3, 4. Even thus our Lord, the great Prophet of his Church, as his Cuſtom was, went into the Synagogue at *Nazareth* on the Sabbath Day, and ſtood up for to read; and there was deliver'd unto him the Book of the Prophet *Iſaias*, and when he had open'd or unfolded the Book, he found the Place were it was Written, *the Spirit of the Lord is upon me*; and he cloſed the Book, and he gave it again unto the Miniſter, and ſat down; and he began, ſaying, *This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your Ears. And all bare him Witneſs, and wondred at the gracious Words which proceeded out of his Mouth*, Luke iv. 16----22. Now, Gentlemen, be pleaſed to make Application of your own Doctrine your ſelves; for indeed, it often is very hard to reconcile it with Scripture. Furthermore the Apoſtles do frequently quote the Text of the *Old Teſtament*, and appeal to it in their arguing with the *Jews*, and particular at *Theſſalonica* in the Synagogue, (where *Moſes* was conſtantly read) Paul *as his manner was*, did, *three Sabbath-days reaſon with them out of the Scriptures*, Acts xvii. 1, 2. Pray Sirs, therefore, was he Inſpir'd in that Reaſoning? The ſame Apoſtle, admoniſhes *Timothy* to ſtir up the Gift of God in him, and ſaith, 1 *Tim.* iv. 13. *Give attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to*

Doctrine, and, *neglect not the Gift that is in thee.* Was then the Reading of *Timothy* inconsistent with that Gift he is advised to stir up, or not? For I do not understand your Rule, and pray you to explain, whether ye intend by it to encourage a Wild Enthusiasm, or only to withstand one, that is true, and Scripture-Proof?

DOCTRINE XXIV.

The Knowledge of Mens Thonghts, if it were true, we confess would be something *to prove Inspiration, but a few Instances of this kind should not pass as Miraculous.*

Answer. Suppose it then for assuredly true, That the Spirit on a Prophet has the Knowledge of Mens Thoughts, the Scripture is clear in the Point, that it must be the Spirit of God; for the Prayer of *Solomon* says, 1 *Kings* viii. 39. *Hear thou in Heaven, thy dwelling Place, and give to every Man, according to his Ways, whose Heart thou knowest; for thou, even thou only, knowest the Hearts of all the Children of Men:* Which is the Foundation of Confidence in Prayer to Him in Secret. Therefore God himself claims it as his own Peculiar, in *Jerem.* xvii. 9, 10. *The Heart is deceitful above all Things, who can know it? I the Lord search the Heart, I try the Reins.* Thus in *Amos* iv. 13. *The Lord, the God of Hosts in his Name, who declareth unto Man what is his Thought.* And again, in *Rev.* ii. 23. *All the Churches shall know that I am He who searches the Heart.* Our Lord Redeemer said to the *Pharisees*, Luke xvi. 15. *Ye are they which justify your selves before Men, but God knoweth your Hearts*; and I take it as an Evidence of our Saviour's Divinity, that *he needed not that any should testify of Man, for He knew what was in Man*, *John* ii. 25. Thus also his Apostles, upon his anticipating their Enquiry into a Point, and answering their Desire before it was expressed, do solemnly confess, *John* xvi. 30. *Now are we sure that thou knowest all Things, and needest not that any Man should ask thee, BY THIS we believe, that thou camest forth from God*; which is a more ample Confession than we find made by them, upon the occasion of any of his Miracles. Furthermore, the discerning of Spirits Natural or Supernatural, was one frequently acknowledg'd Gift of the Holy Ghost; for concerning the Spirit Inspiring, it is said, *Heb.* iv. 12, 13. *The Word of God is quick and powerful, a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his Sight; but all Things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do.* *Peter* also having upon him this Gift

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of Diſcerning, ſaid to *Ananias*, *Why has thou conceiv'd this Thing in thy Heart, and why has Satan filled thine Heart?* And ſays St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 24, 25. *If all propheſy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all, and thus are the ſecrets of his Heart made manifeſt; and ſo, falling down on his Face, he will worſhip God, and report that God is in you of a Truth.*

Seeing therefore, that the Scriptures are ſo plain in this Caſe, and the Primitive Ages of Chriſtianity did appeal unto the Spirit of Prophecy on this Account, in the Election of Miniſters, as in *Acts* i. 24. and moreover, did univerſally take for granted, that according to the Text, *the diſcerning of Thoughts*, when the Fact was evinced, was clear Demonſtration of the Divinity of that Spirit which in, or unto any Prophet, openly diſcover'd them; as is particularly illuſtrated, *Nehem.* vi. 12, 14. touching *Noadiah*, *Shemaiah*, and other Prophets: How come we now-a-days, ſo to unlearn the Scriptures then, as to affirm, *That a few Inſtances of this Kind, ſhould not paſs as Miraculous?* Nevertheleſs, ſeeing ye confeſs it is *ſomething* towards proving Inſpiration, I ſhould have been glad that the Number of Inſtances requiſite had been fixed; becauſe, tho' ſome may think Seven ſufficient, others may demand Forty, to make it Miraculous: Nay poſſibly, the poor Infidel and unlearned in the *Corinthians*, that *fell down on his Face*, and acknowledg'd God in the Prophets, *of a Truth*, was not particularly convinced of the leaſt of theſe Numbers. I cannot tell, who has indeed Authority to fix any Number of Inſtances; for one Thought alone ſecret in my Heart, known only to God, but diſcover'd by the Spirit of Prophecy, would be more than a *Nathaniel* needed, to convince him that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was the Son of God, and the King of *Iſrael*; aud the peculiar Commendation of *Nathaniel*, by the beſt judge of Characters, ought to be more reſpected than it is among Chriſtians. But, why ſhould I argue with modern Infidels in this Point, upon a Scripture Foot? for, ſuppoſe that there were Inſtances of the diſcerning of Thought, by a prophetick Spirit, more then a few, it would poſſibly amount to very little at the laſt; for, ſay they, we confeſs this would be *ſomething* to prove Inſpiration; and when we enquire what that ſomething means, the Anſwer is given us poſitively already in Article XV. *Nothing can prove Inſpiration but ſuch Miracles as were wrought by* Moſes, *our Saviour, and his Apoſtles.* And even this demanded Proof is by our *Thomaſſes*, clogged too with the

further Demand, that they ſhould be wrought before the Prophet is heard, and then, after all, the Concluſion on that Head is no more than this, *Then we ſhall have SOME REASON to liſten to what they have to ſay to us, but till then, we ſhall have none*; which is directly contrary to the Tenour of Scripture, that requires Hearing as the means of Faith.

We might go on to enumerate many more Tenets, commonly received touching Prophecy, which are merely Traditions and Dogmaes, vented by thoſe Elders who claim to ſit in the Seat of *Moſes*, the Leaven of whoſe Doctrine we are commanded to be aware of, ſo far as they make the Word of God void, and of none Effect. But theſe are more than we could have wiſhed, for there is nothing more plainly, more ſtrongly and repeatedly commanded in the written Word of God, than an Obedience to his Voice revealing, according to the Ways ſeverally, wherein his good Pleaſure ſhall chooſe to ſpeak. But theſe Commands of God are fruſtrated and rendred of no effect, when we admit the Doctrines of Men, to preſcribe to, and teach us divers Rules, directly oppoſed to the Law and Teſtimony Divine; ſo that when theſe Rules and Principles of Diſobedience are vented in a manner which claims an Authority, this is properly teaching of *the laying aſide the Commandments of God*, that *the Tradition of Men* may be obſerv'd and held inſtead therof, *Mark* vii. 5------13. Wherefore upon the very ſame Point we are now inſiſting, to wit, that the Viſion or revealing Manifeſtation to all the Prophets [*Chald.* all Prophecy] was to the Learned become as unknown, as the Contents of a Letter ſealed, *Iſaiah* xxix. 10------16. Our Saviour Himſelf, from *Iſaiah*, does alſo apply, and leave for our warning the ſame words, *This People draweth nigh unto me with their Mouth, and honoureth me with their Lips, but their Heart is far from me. But in vain do they worſhip me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, Mat. xv. 8, 9. For thus, however ſound in other Doctrines of the written word of the Lord, Men may be, yet if upon the ſubject before us, they do, with a Miniſterial Authority, advance and preach their own invented Syſtems, they put themſelves under the Condition unto which the laſt mention'd Text does refer; and as ſuch, every good Chriſtian has a Commiſſion ſufficient, nay an indiſpenſible Obligation from this ſole Maſter of the Houſhold to oppoſe them.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Modern Opinions concerning PROPHECY.

§ 1. TO re-assume then the State of our Argument, it lies thus: That as Christians we stand bound, to walk according to all the Precepts and Commands of God's Word, to hope also in its Promises and pray for them, to stand in Awe and reverential Fear of our supream Sovereign's Denunciations: And finally, to believe all that is written therein, touching the Discoveries of Himself, graciously vouchsafed unto Mankind. Moreover, since the Christian Church has erred universally in many Things, and we in this happy Part of it have renounced any human Authority, that has acted dissonantly from and contrary to, the express Tenour of the Divine Will, in several Points, and are equally bound by our Principles to do so in all others; those that are of the Reformed Faith and Communion, accordingly building themselves wholly upon the written Records of God's prophetick Word, and owning the same *a compleatly sufficient Rule, to determine by in all necessary Cases*, are oblig'd to oppose whatsoever usurps and supersedes the Authority thereof. We in like Manner, in the whole Scheme of the present Argument, while we are treating upon the Subject, of God revealing Himself after divers Manners, according to his own good Pleasure; do think, we have acted upon the general Foot of Duties incumbent on all Christians, whilst we have pursued strictly the Measures prescribed to us from the unapproachable Throne of all Majesty in the Highest, for the Knowledge of Him; and do think we stand acquitted, by the very Foundations of the Reformation, whilst we renounce the Authority of Traditions, and Doctrines meerly Human, in the Point before us, tho' they may claim a Prescription, from some Part of the Church in the Third and the Fourth Centuries; for every Reformation that stops short of the Rule Apostolical, is imperfect.

§ 2. In the first Part of this Treatise, we have done our Endeavour, to search into the true Knowledge of God's Word, and the proper Sense and Meaning of it, as it lies most expressive in the original Tongues; thence we have traced the Stream, nearest to the Fountain, as it is convey-

pɔ in the Channel of the antient and moſt univerſally eſteem'd Tranſlations of the ſacred Text. From this Foundation laid, of the Apoſtles and Prophets diligently looked into, that we might have the more firm Aſſurance of our Faith in God, we have proceeded in the Second Part, to examine what were the Evidences of like Fact, and what the Principles touching it in the Firſt, and therefore the more pure and well inſtructed Ages of the Chriſtian Church; for tho' no Reverence of Antiquity ought to warrant Error, yet in the Point before us, it is the moſt clear of it by the Scripture Canon, and *Truth* is neceſſarily an elder Brother to Error, which is but a Deviation and Apoſtacy from the former: And becauſe the very Fact apparent in Part II. is for the moſt of it generally unknown, and thro' Ignorance raſhly denied, even generally alſo; and foraſmuch as moſt Principles are beſt illuſtrated by their Contraries, we have endeavour'd in the Third Part hereof, to diſcover the Riſe and Progreſs of thoſe oppoſite Principles, which ſtand againſt the recited ones in the Second Part, and which are likely to have prevailed, in latter Ages to the almoſt total ſupreſſing the Evidences of Facts in the latter. In the Chain of this Argument, we have now at length, in this Fourth Part, made an Enquiry into the Modern Doctrines and Concluſions, touching the Ways of God revealing Himſelf, by the Spirit of Prophecy, in Dreams, Viſions, Voices, Heavenly, and by the prophetick *Afflatus*, or Inſpiration, ſtiled in Scripture, the Word of the Lord; the Purport of which Enquiry is to diſcover, whether the Principles and Doctrines now prevailing, are Standard by the Scriptures of Truth, and agreeable either to the Faith once formerly deliver'd to the Saints, or to the Teſtimony of the purer Ages of Chriſtianity touching it, whilſt theſe did themſelves enjoy corroborating and explanatory Inſtances thereof.

§ 3. The Sum of all that has been thus inſiſted on, according to the beſt Ability of the Enquirer, does finally amount to thus much; That the very Learned, and even more Pious among the Chriſtians of our Time, as well as others, have taken up for granted, many Tenets, Opinions and Concluſions, touching the Spirit of Prophecy, which are not warrantable; but on the contrary appear condemn'd, by the very Text of Scripture it ſelf, and by the more pure antient Fathers of the Church, before *Conſtantine*. Therefore, appealing to theſe, both the more ſure Word of Prophecy, and the more intelligent and uncor-

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rupted Times of Chriſtianity; whilſt we ſtand acquitted by them, we do not need to be aſhamed of a Confeſſion of Truth, tho' at a Time when the World is under a Deluge of Ignorance therein, and the moſt unjuſtifiable Prejudice againſt it. We have not advanced any Thing in Favour (as we conceive) of a guilty and fooliſh Enthuſiaſm, but ſuch an one only, as by the Tenour of our Scripture Faith, we are bound in the ſtrongeſt Obligations upon Conſcience, to admit with a reverential Fear, and by the Firſt and Great Commandment to obſerve and keep. By the Law and previous Teſtimonies of God, we are no longer therefore at Liberty, without the heavieſt Load of Divine Diſpleaſure, to reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt at any Time, when He ſhall ſpeak prophetically. Woe be to them, that ſet themſelves in Array againſt their Maker; we dare not be found fighting againſt God, in ſubſcribing to anti-ſcriptural Principles, dictated from the Pulpit; and 'tis very hard for any one, as well as *Saul, to kick againſt the Pricks.*

§ 4. Our Purpoſe herein being to preſs the incumbent Obligation of the buried and quite forgotten Precepts of God, for a Reverence to his Voice extraordinary, accordingly we do but urge Men, to have Recourſe to their firſt Principles, of believing on the Scripture Foot, and retrieving from Oblivion, the Ways and Steps of our antient Fathers in Chriſt, the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, the firſt Believers in Jeſus, and the noble Army of Martyrs, Confeſſors, and Witneſſes of his mighty Power in the Chriſtian Church, for Three Hundred Years. We do not plead, for any Exemption from an Obedience to, whatſoever He, our Divine Saviour authorizes and commanded his Apoſtles, to Preach, that we ſhould obſerve and do; nor have produced any Preſident, of vacating and deſtroying the Office of the Teacher, in the Chriſtian Church, or laid a Foundation of perſwading Men to renounce it; but contrariwiſe, founded our ſelves upon the Practice and Doctrine of the Ages, that did allow the ſame, under the Condition of preſerving ſacred alſo, That of the Prophet, and the joyous Priviledge of the Church, to partake the Teſtimonies of Chriſt's Preſence and Abode with her, as the ſovereign and ruling Head of the Houſhold of Faith.

§ 5. The Bent of the whole Treatiſe being intended but a Defence, of the Rights and Regalities of our ſole Maſter upon Earth, the Divine Prophet, and Royal Prieſt of his Church; wherever theſe fail to be concerned, let all Argument ſink into nothing, as they deſerve. Some other of

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the Prerogatives of this mighty King, as they are contained in the grand Charter, from which we hold the Knowledge of Him, and have a Title to an Inheritance, among the Heirs of his purchaſed Poſſeſſion, were once in the Purpoſe of the Author hereof, to have here compendiouſly annexed; I mean thoſe more eſpecially, which were acknowledg'd by the Ages of the Chriſtian Church, wherein the Spirit of Prophecy was owned the Guide in all Truth, and the ſole competent Expoſiter of his own Dictates in the Scripture. For we have taken Notice already, that in thoſe prophetick Times, the Doctrine and Faith of the Kingdom of Chriſt (to be in a far more glorious Manner exerciſed and univerſally prevailing, than was then) did generally either obtain, or was not exploded as in the Ages ſince, it has been; and the Biſhop of *Bath* and *Wells*'s *Demonſtration of the Meſſias*, acquaints us that they did alſo expect the *Elias* of *Malachi* ſtill to come. But becauſe this Treatiſe, has already ſwell'd to a conſiderable Bulk, and the great Subject once propoſed is of ſo vaſt an Extent, ſpread through all the Books of the Old and New Teſtament; that the moſt compendious collating of Texts upon that Head, to give an Abſtract any Thing diſtinct thereof, muſt of neceſſity have taken up many Sheets, we have for the preſent dropped that Deſign, tho' I cannot but think it highly advancing the Honour of our God and King, if Men would be perſwaded to look anew into the Scriptures, and examine them afreſh, upon that Subject; leaſt while we pretend to know him fully, we are willingly ignorant and Deſpiſers too, of his Crown and Dignity. For we have already cited Dr. *Grabes*'s Report, that all who were ſound in Faith, during the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, did acknowledge the Doctrine of the Kingdom State of the Church, to come; and ſince there are many Tracts written thereon of late Days, tho' little preaching of it to the People, even by thoſe Miniſters who believe it; we hope the antient Faith of the Saints, in that Point is reviving, tho' we cannot without much Aſtoniſhment but obſerve, that in theſe modern Tracts, little or no Notice is taken, of the many Prophecies both in the Old and New Teſtament, which declare moſt expreſly, that the Spirit of Prophecy revived, is to attend that great Revolution in the Church. But as I have in divers Parts of this Treatiſe, inſtanced already in ſeveral of thoſe prophetick Promiſes, I wiſh that the omitting thereof, by the Writers on that Subject, may not flow from ſomewhat of *Unwillingneſs to receive the Love of the Truth*, in this

this Point; for to be willingly ignorant of the Truth as it is in Jeſus, is no ſmall Crime, and to be partially affected in our Minds againſt it, is alledg'd for the ſpecial Cauſe, 2 *Theſ.* ii. 10, 11. why God would deliver up the apoſtatized Chriſtian Church unto, and ſend upon her ſtrong Deluſion.

§ 6. But as we are limited in this Treatiſe, to the Subject of the prophetical Teſtimonies of *Jeſus*, the WORD who liveth from everlaſting and abideth for ever, WISDOM, who was from before the Foundations of the Earth; we ſay, there was an original Subordination of Man's Underſtanding, framed by the great Creator, to that *Word and Wiſdom*, and his Creator made a Demand from him of that Subordination before the Fall, in the Command arbitrary, not to touch the Tree of Knowledge. Thus after the World was fallen under the Dominion of Infidelity, and God call'd *Abraham* to become the Father of the Faithful, He arbitrarily demands an Homage of his Underſtanding, to the Voice and ſovereign Will of his Lord, in the Precept of Circumciſion. In like Manner, all the Prophets being reckon'd from *Samuel*, *Acts* iii. 24. the original Right of God to an immediate and arbitrary Command over his Creatures, is by him aſſerted, ſaying; to hearken to the Voice of the Lord, is more acceptable to him, than Sacrifice (tho inſtituted) and Diſobedience to it is Rebellion, and parallel to the Sin of Witchcraft and Idolatry. All the Prophets of the Old Teſtament, do frequently remind the Children of *Iſrael*, of this original Conſtitution of their Covenant Relation unto God, made in *Abraham* and more explicitly declared at *Mount Sinai*, and do charge the Rejectors of the Word of the Lord by the Prophet, with Rebellion againſt God their Sovereign. Furthermore, we ſay that the prophetical Declarations of this Kind, are none of the Ritual and Civil Laws, which our Saviour, the Lawgiver of his Church, came to aboliſh, nay, on the contrary, He enforces them anew. *Behold I ſend you forth*, Mat. x. 16. 14; *and whoever ſhall not receive you, nor hear your Words, it ſhall be more tollerable*, &c. *But he that heareth you, heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you deſpiſeth me*, Luke x. 16. *And behold, I ſend the Promiſe of my Father upon you, and ye ſhall be endowed with Power from on High*, Chap. 24. 49. *Verily verily I ſay unto you, he that receiveth WHOMSOEVER I ſhall ſend* (εαν τινα πεμψω if I ſhall ſend any Man, he that receiveth him) *receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that ſent me*, John xiii. 20.

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§ 7. According to the Tenour of this Conſtitution revived and eſtabliſhed by our Saviour, after the Day of *Pentecoſt*, that He ſent the Promiſe of the Father upon his Diſciples; not only the Eleven, but all that receiv'd Power from on high, that is, the Spirit of Prophecy, were to be receiv'd and heard, as Chriſt Himſelf, who ſent them forth. For here is no Limitation to any Number of dying Perſons, in all the Tenor of this Commiſſion; the Great Prophet who liveth and abideth for ever, is to be receiv'd, heard and obeyed, in whomſoever He *ſhall ſend*, without Limitation of Time. Thus then being ſent and empower'd from on high, while the Apoſtles remained all at *Jeruſalem*, thoſe that were ſcatter'd abroad, went every where preaching the *Word*, *Acts* viii. 4. In particular, St. *Paul* being ſent forth a Miniſter by Chriſt, he pleads largely in the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, touching the Covenant and Law of Faith, made with *Abraham*, who received the Promiſe of having all the Nations of the Farth bleſſed in him, becauſe he obeyed the immediate Voice of God. And in this reſpect, the true Circumciſion were the Children and Followers of the Faith of *Abraham*, who worſhipp'd God in the Spirit, as revealing Himſelf then by the holy Apoſtles and Prophets; on which Account, ſays he, *Rom.* iii. 31. *Do we then make void the Law thro' Faith? God forbid: Yea, we eſtabliſh the Law.* And thus purſuing the Argument of Faith, the Faith of *Abraham*, he, the Apoſtle by the Spirit, eſtabliſhed the antient Root and Foundation of it, that is, an Obedience to, and Reliance upon God revealing. Therefore, his Exhortations Apoſtolick, which are univerſally and perpetually obliging Commands, are frequent to the ſame Effect, *Quench not the Spirit; Let the WORD of Chriſt dwell in you richly, in all Wiſdom; Be not drunk with Wine, but be filled with the Spirit; Obey them who have ſpoken unto you the Word of the Lord. If any propheſy according to the Analogy of Faith, let them propheſy; Deſpiſe not Propheſyings* (or whomſoever Chriſt ſhall ſend) *for he that deſpiſeth, deſpiſeth not Man, but God, who hath given unto us his holy Spirit. O fooliſh* Galatians, *who hath bewitched you, that ye ſhould not obey the Truth! This only would I learn of you, receiv'd ye the Spirit, by the Works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith? Are ye ſo fooliſh; having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the Fleſh? He therefore that miniſtreth to you the Spirit, doth he it by the Works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith? Even as Abraham believed God* (revealing) *and it was accounted to him for Righteouſneſs; know ye therefore, that they which be of Faith, are the Children of*

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Abraham, and are bleſſed with faithful Abraham. And we have receiv'd the Promiſe of the Spirit, thro' Faith; for the juſt ſhall live by Faith, Gal. iii. 1---14.

§ 8. The Authority therefore of the prophetick Spirit, the great promiſe of the Father, that is, of the *Paracleet*, who received of Chriſt, and ſhew'd the Will of God unto Men, and filled up our Saviour's Words, *I will not leave you Orphans, I will come again unto you, I will be with you always unto the end of the World*, was ſo ſettled in the Apoſtolick Times, that, *Thus ſaith the Holy Ghoſt*, was of the ſame Significancy in the Evangelical Prophet, *as Thus ſaith the Lord*, in thoſe preceeding him; with this Diſtinction, that tho' among the Prophets of the Old, there was none greater than *John Baptiſt*, yet the leaſt that followed, was greater than he; if the Prophets of the *Old Teſtament*, had a celeſtial Trumpet put to their Mouths, thoſe of the *New* alſo, *ſounded out the Word of the Lord*, 1 Theſ. i. 8. And thus, *to one was given by the Spirit the word of Wiſdom, to another, the Word of Knowledge by the ſame Spirit, dividing to every Man ſeverally as he would; ſo the whole Body, the Church of Chriſt, were all Baptized into one Body, and made to drink into one Spirit.* The Character under which the Prophet ſpake under the Goſpel, was no leſs than the Voice of God, 1 *Cor.* vii. 10. and if it was the Spirit of Chriſt which ſignified Things to the antient Prophets, the Word of the Lord alſo as of Old, did abide in the Believers after Chriſt. Thus the *Gentiles* at *Antioch*, *Acts* xiii. 48, 49. *glorified the Word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believ'd it, and the Word of the Lord was publiſh'd throughout all the Region.* And ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* i. 25. *The Word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the word which by the Goſpel is preached unto you.* The word *JEHOVAH*, is in the *New Teſtament*, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, who is, was, and is to come; therefore the Majeſty of that four Letter'd Name, the moſt Glorious of all wherewith the inconceivable is ſtiled, is not a whit ſunk or abated under the Goſpel Diſpenſation. In like manner, parallel to the Phraſe and Stile of the *Old Teſtament*, *James* Propheſying, *Chap.* v. 4. ſays, *The cries of them which have reaped your Fields, are entred into the Ears of the LORD OF HOSTS.* And thus again, *Rom.* ix. 29. is by the *Greek*, *Except the Lord of Hoſts had left us a Seed*, &c.

§ 9. According to this Conſtitution of the Church, the foundation of the Apoſtle and Prophets ſtands cemented together, under Chriſt the Head and Corner-Stone, with reſpect

ſpect to obeying the immediate Voice of the Lord Prophetically; and the true Circumciſion or Church among Chriſtians, Followers, and Children of the Faith of *Abraham*, were as much bound as ever the *Jews* were, to bow the Knee, and not deſpiſe or reject the Spirit of Prophecy; which was certainly no leſs among them the Spirit of Chriſt, than it was under the Law. The Goſpel (as the *Greek* Word ſignifies) was the prophetical Meſſage of God, in the Primitive Times of Chriſtianity, even as the *New Teſtament* Scriptures aſſert, *That the Goſpel was preached unto* Abraham, *and unto the* Iſraelites *in the Wilderneſs*. In purſuance of theſe Principles, and the Order eſtabliſh'd by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, the Church rightly conſtituted under Prophets and Teachers, did for a Hundred Years after the Apoſtolick Age, continue without any open Breach of that Conſtitution. *Apollinaris* Biſhop of *Hierapolis*, began firſt the War upon thoſe who had the Teſtimony of *Jeſus*, which in the prophetick Stile of the *Old Teſtament*, was a Rebellion againſt the Lord, and in that of the *New*, was a rejecting of Chriſt Himſelf. Wherefore, the ſounder Part of the Church, the then Adherers to Prophecy, who durſt not violate the Commands of Chriſt and his Apoſtles in this Caſe, pleaded the Promiſes of the Spirit prophetically, to be perpetual; and the denunciations of the Antient Prophets on this Head, to be equally valid then and in Force, as ever before. Which Promiſes and Denuntiations are more at large ſpecified towards the cloſe of Part III.

§ 10. About the Year 200. the Adherents to the Spirit of Prophecy, and the Deſpiſers and Rejecters of Him, became formed ſeverally into diſtinct Communions; and from that Time, the Subject and Scope of the Third Part of this Treatiſe, ſhews at large, how the Matter proceeded for Two Hundred Years more; at the end of which, the Iſſue ſeems to have been an Excluſion from the Communion of the Chriſtian Church, of all that ſhould pretend to ſpeak by a Power above their own: And during the Times of this Diſſenſion, and different Communions in the Chriſtian Church, the Queſtion was, on which ſide that Schiſm in the Body was to be charged? Now the Adherers to Prophecy alledged, that the Union of the Body, was that One Spirit prophetically exiſting, who being ſubmitted to, did knit together the ſeveral Parts and Churches, and jointed it into one Temple, in, and under Chriſt the Sovereign Head; therefore, theſe did turn upon the other ſide, that

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of St. *Jude*, *in the laſt Time, there ſhall be Mockers, walking after their own ungodly Luſts; theſe be they, who ſeparate themſelves, ſenſual, having not the Spirit.* On the contrary, the *Apollinarian* Churches, claimed an Authority in the Biſhops uninſpired, ſuperior to that of Prophets, and in conſequence, that the right of Judicature over Spirits belonging to them, they tryed that of *Montanus* and others, and pronounced a Sentence of Condemnation upon the Spirit which moved and ſpake by them, and of Excommunication upon the Perſons for obeying it; which Perſons Excommunicated, adhering to the primary Diſcipline in the Church of the Spirit prophetical, being ſubject only to be judged by others who had the Spirit extraordinary for doing it, did form themſelves (after Excommunication) into a diſtinct Communion and Diſcipline under the Spirit; and for refuſing to ſubmit to the Sentence abovefaid, they were called the Sciſmaticks, and tho' they continued ſound in all Points of Doctrine, and unblameable in Life, they were pronounced Hereticks too.

§ 11. This being the Caſe of the original Breach into the Conſtitution of the Church, framed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, under Prophets and Teachers; we ſhall recapitulate nothing more, of what is ſaid touching it in Part III. than that the *Apollinarians* growing in Number, thro' the Corruption of Times ſucceeding, they took the place, after *Conſtantine*, of the Catholick Church viſible. We know very well, that from, and after the Time of the total Suppreſſion or Extinction of publick Propheſyings, the Catholick Church, Embodied under a new Conſtitution, wherein Truth and Orthodoxy took its Denomination from Number, grew more and more daily into Uſurpations over the Authority of the Sacred Word of Prophecy Written; and thence it followed, that the diſſenting from, and Oppoſers of ſuch Uſurpations, were termed Hereticks, even as it is at this Day; that the Church aſſuming the Name of Catholick from her political Union and Numbers, do brand us of the Reformation, with the odious Character of Hereticks; which we to clear our ſelves of, do appeal to the Law and Teſtimony Divine, from the deciſion and determination of the ſaid Catholick Church, uſurping an Authority over it. Now, this being the Foundation whereon Proteſtants ſtand in all other Points, I believe there is none among us will be ſo ſhameleſs as openly to aſſert, That the Point of Prophecy ought to be deny'd the Benefit of this Foundation; on the contrary, I am fully aſſured, that I

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am writing and appealing to an Age and Nation, wherein it will be univerſally owned, that no Man or Number of Men, are to judge the Law of God in Scripture, but will readily agree, that even That is to judge for, and determine them.

§ 12. If this be a general Rule, whereon *Proteſtants* do proceed and build themſelves, in all other Points, there is much more reaſon ſtill, why Men ſhould not act without or againſt it, in the Caſe of the Spirit of Prophecy, whenſoever it ſhall or may appear, becauſe of the Sublimity and high Importance of the Subject: For, the Spirit of Prophecy is properly Man's Superior, nay, his Lord and Governor, and even his Law-giver, ſeeing He that ſpake at any Time, and at all Times, the Word and Sovereign Will of God our Maker, cannot be leſs than ſo. Let us then, give to God, the Things that are God's peculiar, and touching the Ways of the Spirit confeſs, that his Law preceding, is perfectly Holy, Juſt and Good, and the ſole Meaſure by which all the Ways of Men are to be accounted, equal or unequal. For, as it is in *Iſa.* xl. 13. *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his Counſellour hath taught Him? With whom took he Counſel, and who inſtructed him, and taught Him Knowledge, and ſhew'd to Him the Way of Underſtanding?* or ought to be allowed ever to do ſo?

§ 13. The ſtreight Line of God's Word being admitted for the indefeaſible Rule of proceeding in our Judgment, on all ſuch Appearances Spiritual; whatſoever being applied to it, and is thereby found to be crooked, ought to be rejected by all that love the Lord Jeſus in Sincerity; for, the Tenor of the firſt and great Commandment to love God with all our Soul, and in the firſt Place to ſeek his Kingdom, and the Honour of the King of Glory, does abſolutely oblige us to ſubmit to his Sovereign Government, by the Spirit of Prophecy adminiſtring the ſame over us; without which, a due Regard is not paid to his ſpecial Commandment in 1 *John* iii. 23. of believing in the Name (which includes the Authority) of his Son, Jeſus Chriſt. So far then, as the Church, or greater Body of profeſſed Chriſtians have in any Age paſs'd or preſent, departed in this Matter of Inſpiration Prophetick, from the perfect Rule of Faith, and uſurped and exerciſed an Authority which never belonged to any of them; ſo far we are juſtify'd in the Sight of God, under the Act of believing in Him, and not in the Concluſions of the Church, either paſs'd or preſent. But in the whole of this Argument, we are founded upon the

the Suppoſal of Propheſyings agreeable to the written Word, in all Things; and as to Viſions and Voices heard, if the Import of what is ſo ſeen and heard, be perſonal only, they ought to be obeyed or diſobeyed, according to the Faith of the Receiver, the Matter does not concern Chriſtians in common: But if the Word of the Lord come by Viſion or Voice to any one, to impart it to the Churches, for their publick Edification, Exhortation and Comfort, the Subject of ſuch a Meſſage is to undergo in all Points, the ſame Examination, as publick Propheſyings.

§ 14. Let the Devil then take never ſo fine an Appearance of an Angel of Light; either ſeating himſelf in a Throne under the Stile of the Univerſal Church, or appearing as an Angel from Heaven, to give his Dictates by Viſion, Voice or Propheſyings: In either of theſe Caſes equally, if any other Goſpel or Meſſage be taught, different from what *Jehovah* hath ſpoken by the Mouth of all his holy Prophets, ſince the World began; the ſame Standard remains for both, and in either Caſe, let him be *Anathema, Maranatha.* What therefore ſoever Legends of Stories are to be produced of falſe Viſions, Dreams and Voices, that ſerved for the Occaſion of introducing Errors into the Church, after the Ages we have mention'd in the Second and Third Parts of this Treatiſe; they ought all to have undergone the Scripture Teſt, and the admitting of them without ſuch Scrutiny, and without their being approved by it, was as well an Effect of the Antichriſtian Apoſtacy, as the Antiſcriptural Condemnation of other Prophets (for any Thing I can find) was the firſt Spring of that Apoſtacy. For, having meaſured and weighed the ſeveral Articles exhibited againſt the Prophetical and Inſpir'd, in the Second and Third Centuries; by the beſt Diſcoveries of the Scripture Law, that I am able to make; the Judgment, which was paſs'd againſt them, was built upon Arguments meerly human, which ſtand condemn'd themſelves by the written Word, and ſovereign Laws of God. If it be ſo, and proviſionally, until it ſhall be made to appear otherwiſe, I cannot but conceive from 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 3, 12. that he who withheld and letted the Uſurpation of the Man of Sin, was the Spirit of Prophecy ſubſiding in the Church of Chriſt; which when it was taken away, by reaſon that Men receiv'd not the Love of the Truth; for that very Cauſe God ſent them ſtrong Deluſion, that they who would not receive the Truth, ſhould believe a Lie; that is, they who would not ſuffer the Burden of true Prophecy, ſhould be given up,

to give Credit to the working of Satan, with all Power and Signs, and lying Wonders, *viz.* Visions and Voices, from the Adversary and Opponent to the Spirit of Christ.

§ 15. Dr. *Stillingfleet's Fanaticism of the Church of Rome*, tells us, *p.* 226, 227. "That the most celebrated religious "Orders of *Benedictines, Carthusians, Dominicans, Franciscans* "and *Jesuits*, were instituted by Enthusiastick Persons, up- "on the Credit of their Visions and Revelations. For the "Church of *Rome* is no such Enemy to Enthusiasms and "Revelations, as some believe; but if among all their Vi- "sions, Men do but mix some *that confirm their particular* "*Doctrines*; as the Visions of *Juliana*, concerning the great "Worship of the blessed Virgin from her Son, and others "touching Transubstantiation, worshipping of Saints, Pur- "gatory, the Holy Vernacle at *Rome*, and such like Foppe- "ries; for these make all the rest very acceptable among "them. And as to the Inspir'd Persons (*p.* 241.) who were "Founders of religious Orders, *Popes* have been extream- "ly partial in Favour of them, because they found these "Enthusiasts their most useful Instruments, in all their U- "surpations over the Princes, the secular Clergy, and the "People; insomuch, that when some of these Enthu- "siasts, under the Name of one *Joachim*, published a "Book, *Anno* 1254. entitled, *The Everlasting Gospel*, where- "in they so highly extolled *LOVE*, that they said, *God* "*was only good, and not just*, and that the Gospel of Christ "was not the *Gospel of the Kingdom*, but must give Way to "another Gospel; the Honour of these Friars was dear- "er to the *Pope*, than that of Christ and the Christian "Religion, because the Scope of this Book was, *to advance* "*the Honour of religious Orders:* Whereas on the other Side, "when some Enthusiasts called *Beguines*, and stiling them- "selves Apostolicals, and *the Illuminated*, spread mightily "in *Italy*, *France*, *Spain*, and *Germany*; these were excom- "municated and even extirpated with the Sword, because "they charged the Church to be Antichrist, and the *Popes* "and *Prelates* to be Impostors and Deceivers. And again, "when *Ignatius*, the Founder of the *Jesuits*, abounding in "Visions and Revelations, besought of Pope *Paul* III. an "Institution of his Order, *Anno Christi*, 1540. the Pope "being throughly satisfied in the *main Point* of their being "serviceable to the Interest of that Church, all other Dif- "ficulties were soon conquer'd; and the Pope himself ha- "ving read the first Draught of the Rules of the Society "of *Jesuits*, cryed out, *the Spirit of the Lord is here.* But "the most gross Enthusiasm, (*p.* 282. 283.) and extrava-

" gant Illuſions of Fancy, is the Fruit of leaving the Scrip-
" tures, and that moſt plain and certain Way of Religion
" deliver'd therein; againſt which there can be no better
" Care imaginable, than the true Underſtanding of the
" Nature of the Chriſtian Religion; but it is the Deſign
" of the Church of *Rome*, becauſe it is their Intereſt to
" keep the Bible out of the Hands of the People."

§ 16. If then in the further engulfed and darker Times of Antichriſt, after the Expulſion of Propheſying, the Church fell univerſally into a State like to that of the *Jewiſh*, repreſented in *Jer.* v. 31. *The Prophets propheſy falſly, and the Prieſts bear Rule* (or get Money) *by their Means, and my People love to have it ſo*, an Aſtoniſhment indeed, and a Filthineſs was thereby committed. This Practice nevertheleſs, of the Great Whore, and Mother of Abominations flow'd from the ſame Spring, that the rejecting of true Prophets did, *viz.* the laying aſide and voiding the Law of God, as a Standard deciſive, either for holding faſt, or diſapproving what was good or bad by it. When the Apoſtle directs, to *prove all Things*, in Order *to hold faſt that which is good*, we *Proteſtants* allow, that the Proof and Touchſtone, whereby we are to be directed to chooſe the Good, and refuſe the Evil, is the Law and Teſtimony precedently Divine; accordingly, among the *all Things*, every falſe Standard, which Men ſhall preſumptiouſly advance, and place for Trial, inſtead of the Word of God, is in it ſelf evil, and ought to be refuſed, by that Apoſtolick Canon. Seeing therefore, that the Apoſtle, in 1 *Theſſ.* v. 19-21. does introduce the Command of proving all Things, with the Cautions prefix'd of *not quenching the Spirit, or deſpiſing of Propheſyings*, it is manifeſt thence, that we are awfully warned not to try the Spirit of Prophecy by receiv'd Traditions of the Elders, or by any Preconceptions, or Partiality and Byaſs in our Affections againſt it. Now, that we may be diſengaged from all Prepoſſeſſions on this great Point, and in Order to be candid and impartial in the Judgment of it,

§ 17. Let us therefore take the Apoſtle's Direction to *prove all Things*, by examining the Concluſions and Tenets of the Third and Fourth Centuries, touching the Spirit of Prophecy, by the one indeficient Rule, rather than take them for granted, and ſo put the *Montaniſts* (or Prophets of thoſe Times) into the Number of glaring Hereticks, and always mention them as ſuch. But leaving others either to judge without Examination, or to compare the Things of the Spirit then, with the Spiritual Things of

the written Word, the Standard Prophetical undoubtedly divine; I ſhall from my own full Perſwaſion of Mind proviſionally until better Information, in the Word of the Lord, conclude, that the Prophecy of *Iſa. Chap.* v. 1-7. may be pertinently applied unto thoſe Times; *My well beloved hath a Vineyard, in a very fruitful Hill; and he fenced it, and gather'd out the Stones thereof, and planted it with the choiceſt Vine, and built a Tower in the midſt of it, and alſo made a Wall about it; and he looked that it ſhould bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes; and now, O Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and Men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my Vineyard; what could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it ſhould bring forth Grapes, brought it forth wild Grapes: And now, go to, I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard; I will take away the Fence thereof, and it ſhall be eaten up, and break down the Wall thereof, and it ſhall be trodden down; and I will lay it waſt; it ſhall not be pruned, nor digged, but there ſhall come up Briars and Thorns: I will alſo command the Clouds, that they rain no Rain upon it. For the Vineyard of the Lord of Hoſts, is the Houſe of Iſrael, and the Men of Judah his pleaſant Plant, and he looked for Juſtice, but behold Oppreſſion; for Righteouſneſs, but behold, a Cry.*

§ 18. According to this Prophecy, the Vineyard planted with the choiceſt Vine, may well be underſtood of the Chriſtian Church alſo, planted alone at firſt by the Spirit of Prophecy; which being rooted out in the Ages we have treated of, the Vineyard left was degenerated into wild Grapes, even ſower'd with the Doctrines of natural Wiſdom, under the Figments of the true Vine. In all the Parts of human Literature, ſhe flouriſhed indeed, and branched out large Shoots; but all the Luminaries of the Church in that kind, were after *Conſtantine* tinctured with Sentiments, in reſpect to the Spirit of Prophecy, very different from, and even oppoſite to thoſe of the purer Ages before him. And it is obſervable, that all the Learning of the Fourth and the Fifth Centuries, was far from ſtemming the Tide that ran ſtrongly towards the Gulf of the Great Apoſtacy; for the Spirit of Prophecy, which withſtood it, being removed, the Inclinations and Propenſity of Men, to fix upon another Cement of Union in the Church, and another viſible Governour and Umpire, left no Way for the Stream to run, but the ſame Channel wherein the Imperial and ſecular Authority flowed. And thus, God by judicially withdrawing what they had long firſt rejected, deſpiſed and oppoſed, took away the Enclo-

ſure of the Church (ſeparating it from the World) and broke down the Wall thereof, laying it Waſt, and as a Common with the ſenſual and worldly, unpruned and undug, to be overrun with Briars and Thorns, undiſtinguiſhed by the Dews of Heaven; (for the Strictneſs of the antient Diſcipline, was kept up meerly and only by the Authority of the Spirit prophetical,) and all this, was the Fruit and Effect, of their own Choice, for when he look'd for their Acknowledgments, in a cultivating of the choiceſt Vine, the Spirit of Prophecy; inſtead of Juſtice to Him, behold, Oppreſſion; inſtead of Righteouſneſs, in this Account by Faith, behold, a Cry, *we will not have this Man to reign over us.*

§ 19. Why ſhould we wonder, that this ſhould be the Caſe, in Chriſtian Ages, that deſpiſed Prophecy and nevertheleſs flouriſhed in human Learning? We have enough ſaid in the Old and New Teſtament both, upon the Head of worldly Wiſdom, to make us ceaſe Aſtoniſhment; for altho' the Sun ſets, there remains beauteous Things to be ſaid, of the Moon and Stars, and the clearneſs of the Heavens may be lovely ſtill, notwithſtanding that with the Children of Faith, the moſt luminous Preſence of God with his Church, muſt ever be accounted the Spirit of Prophecy. Men indeed by their natural Underſtanding, and weak Eyeſight in ſpiritual Things, will be prone to admire, what is moſt agreable to their own State, and the deep Things of God which the Spirit produceth, becauſe far out of their Sight, will be deſpiſed. Therefore, the Lord ſpake thus to *Iſaiah*, with a ſtrong Hand, and inſtructed him not to walk in the Way of that People, ſaying Chap. viii. 12--17. Strike not in with their *Confederacy, neither fear ye their Fear; ſanctify the Lord of HOSTS HIMSELF, let Him be your Fear, let Him be your Dread, and He ſhall be for a Sanctuary* (a Refuge for ye) *but for a Stone of ſtumbling, and for a Rock of Offence, to both the Houſes of Iſrael, for a Gin, and for a Snare to the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem; and many among them ſhall ſtumble and fall, and be broken, and be ſnared, and be taken. Bind up the Teſtimony* (as a Scroul rowled up.) *ſeal the Law among my Diſciples. And I* (ſaith the Prophet) *will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his Face from the Houſe of Jacob, and I will look for Him.* Chap. xxix. 10--19, *for the Lord hath powred out upon you, the Spirit of deep Sleep, and hath cloſed your Eyes; and the Viſion of all the Prophets, is become unto you as the Words of a Letter ſealed, which is deliver'd to one that is learned, ſaying, read this I pray thee; and he ſaith, I*

cannot, for it is ſealed. And the Book is deliver'd to one, that is not learned, ſaying, read this I pray thee, and he ſaith I am not learned. And the Lord ſaid, foraſmuch as this People draw near with their Mouth, and with their Lips do honour me, but have removed their Hearts far from me, and their Fear towards me, is taught by the PRECEPTS *of Men; therefore the Wiſdom of their Wiſe Men ſhall periſh, and the Underſtanding of their Prudent ſhall be hid; for ſhall the Work ſay of Him that made it, He made me not well, He had no Underſtanding? The Deaf ſhall hear the Words of the Book, and the Eyes of the Blind ſhall ſee out of Obſcurity; the Meek ſhall encreaſe their Joy in the Lord, and the Poor among Men ſhall rejoyce in the Holy One of Iſrael.*

§ 20. The Number of bright Conſtellations for humane Literature, in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries, continuing to ſhine in the Abſence of Prophecy, (and indeed the more ſo, thereby) and their Soundneſs in other Points, may be conſiſtant enough with an unwarrantable Contempt of the Spirit extraordinary, as the rebellious Houſe of *Iſrael* continued to be the Church, and even as it is with us unto this Day. What we are to do, is to enquire, whether they, or the Moderns who ſtand up in Defence of that Contempt and Deſpite, and have added many other Inventions of their own in Oppoſition to Prophecy, be built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apoſtles, in that Oppoſition; in Purſuit therefore, and Search, after the Modern Opinions touching it, I have herein exemplified Twentyfour general Articles of Doctrine, ſuperadded to the Fourteen in the Third Part. By all which, a Computation may be made, whether the Ways and Precepts of the Clergy now, for the trying of Spirits, be more equal than thoſe of their Predeceſſors, and whether either of them be according to the Law and the Teſtimony, the equal and juſt and good, Ways of God for it. The Divines from whom I have drawn theſe Twentyfour Doctrines, are ſtill living, and Men of much more Literature than I pretend to; let them therefore make out their own Ways, and thoſe of the Fathers whom they follow, to be equal by the Divine Law if they can: As to us, who dare not allow them; if we have miſtaken the Tenour and Scope of the Word of God, in any Point, let them ſet us to Rights from it; and if we are under Error, touching the State of Things, in the moſt primitive Times, of the Second and Third Centuries, let them charitably ſhew from Authors of like Antiquity, that we are ſo. All other Authorities will be ſhort of due Satisfaction, becauſe

all

all Ages ſince the Extinction of the Spirit, muſt comparatively be very deficient in this Point, on many Accounts: The Scriptural Enthuſiaſm which we defend alone, ought ever to have been *held faſt as good*, upon the *proving all Things* touching it; and as I do not eſpouſe the Cauſe of any other, if there be Men, who wilfully ſtand up againſt this, I leave once more to their Conſideration, the Prophecy of *Iſaiah* xxx. 8--11. from the *Hebrew* thus; *Now, go write it before them in a Table, and engrave it in a Book, that it may be for the latter Day, a Teſtimony for ever: That this is a rebellious People, lying Children, Children that will not hear the Law of the Lord: Who ſay to the Seers, ye ſhall not ſee; and to the Prophets ye ſhall not propheſy unto us right Things; ſpeak unto us ſmooth Things, propheſy Deluſions. Get ye back out of the Way, turn aſide out of the* (right) *Path; make the Holy One of Iſrael to withdraw, from before our Faces.*

§ 21. It has been pleaded in the foregoing Chapters, by the Deſpiſers of the prophetick Word, that there is no need of Prophecy, which we have already taken Notice of to be the very Specifick Thing forbidden by the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſ.* v. 20. the *Greek* Word there rendred, *Deſpiſe*, ſignifying *to eſteem a Thing nothing worth*; wherefore, in Reſpect to thoſe who place themſelves in the Seat of the Scornful, it is neceſſary to add here ſomewhat, of the Advantages and Benefits of that glorious Gift, which was originally by ſupream Wiſdom beſtowed, to the Edification of the Church, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 22. *Firſt* then, we think it ought to be eſteem'd a high Favour from God, and a diſtinguiſhing Mark of Heavenly Grace, to communicate Himſelf from the Throne of all Majeſty, as well as a Sovereign's Speech to his People, is rightly termed Gracious. We Chriſtians can eaſily grant, that the Ceſſation of Prophecy among the *Jews*, for Four Hundred Years from *Malachi* to *John Baptiſt*, was a turning away of God's Face from that People, and an Eclipſe of the Light of his Countenance towards them. Among the earlieſt and moſt honour'd Ages of Chriſtians, the Spirit of Chriſt in Propheſyings, was eſteem'd as the Preſence of Chriſt with his Spouſe. And in the Second Part hereof we have noted, that there is not a Perſon to be found for Three Hundred Years of the Age of Chriſt or his Church, that ever roſe to ſo high an Antichriſtianiſm, as to ſay or teach publickly, *there was no need of Prophecy*. And whoever now does ſo, we are ſure this is not a Doctrine of the Goſpel, but clearly the Reverſe to it; for the Teſtimony of Jeſus is ſurely ſomething worth to thoſe who ſeek not their

own, but Christ Jesus the Lord. The Testifyer of Christ is called the *Paracleet*, or Comforter in his teaching, and the *Greek* Word, rendred *Gospel*, signifies only *a good Message*; which tho' the Ministry now averse to him, do limit the Constructions thereof to the History we have, of what our Saviour did and said, yet in divers Places of the New Testament, the Word, *Gospel*, is used to express in general, *Inspired Preaching, or Prophetical Revelation*, according to the Tenour of the Apostle's (not exclusive of the Prophet's) Commission, to disciple all Nations, by Preaching and not by Writing; and accordingly many Prophets after the Age of the primary Apostles, did Evangelize and Disciple several Heathen Countries. But in this Sense of *the Gospel*, meaning a prophetick Commission in general, we may understand, *Rom.* i. 1. where St. *Paul* mentions himself to be separated unto the Gospel of God, and that the glorious Gospel of the blessed God was committed to his Trust in being an Apostle by the Commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 *Tim.* i. 1, 11. Thus also his general Commission is plainly understood, when he speaks of finishing the Ministry, he had receiv'd of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God, *Acts* xx. 24. And in *Gal.* i. 11. *the Gospel which was preach'd of me, is not after Man.* In this Sense again, he was ready to preach the Gospel at *Rome* also, and was not ashamed of it, *Rom.* i. 15, 16. Thus *Our Gospel*, 1 *Thes.* i. 5. and *My Gospel*, *Rom.* ii. 16. means his Preaching, nor can consistently bear any other Sense. Thus the Gospel is to be understood, where he served God in the Gospel of his Son, *Rom.* i. 9. In fine the Preaching of our Saviour, is called in divers Places the Gospel, before it was written. Wherefore, in Agreement with this Sense of the Word *Gospel*, ευαγελιον, *Eusebius* mentions many prophetical Preachers, after the Apostolick Age, under the Term of *Evangelists*.

§ 22. Thus Secondly the Gifts of the Spirit was the Confirmation and Establishment of the Churches in Faith, and the primitive Ages gloried in them both against Jews and Heathen, and esteem'd them the gladsom Manifestation of the Presence of Christ with his Spouse. Even the foolish things of God as they are now accounted, *viz.* Visions, Voices, and Prophecy, were by the Ages aforesaid reckon'd as Signs and Wonders, wrought by the Holy Ghost, and as the Riches of the Glory of Divine Grace to the Church. Thus we find *Dionysius*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and many more of the brightest Luminaries for Piety

and

and Learning, ſpeaking always of theſe Thing with Reverence and godly Fear, and magnifying God on this Account. On the other Side, the *Martyrologiſt of Perpetua* tells us, that many were fainting in Faith, becauſe of the Decay of ſuch Manifeſtations of God in Viſion; *Cyprian* ſays, thoſe who derided them were back-Friends to *the ſtated Miniſtry*, and by ſuch Mockery did aim to bring that Inſtitution into Contempt; becauſe *they upheld*, according to the Truſt depoſited with and committed to them, the Authority of Viſions and Reverence due upon that Head. Therefore, *Regaltius* takes Notice that in Order to preſerve the juſt Regard owing to God revealing Himſelf, the moſt eminent of the Fathers in the Church, did uſually communicate the Divine Dreams they had receiv'd, publickly in the Churches. Thus *the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God*, were kept alive, and when Buffoonry on theſe Points took Place, all Contempt of Holy Things came in like a Flood.

§ 23. Wherefore *Thirdly*, The Gifts of the Spirit were for Comfort of Believers, under great Sufferings; ſo that St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* i. 7, ſays; *Our hope of you is ſtedfaſt, knowing that as you are Partakers of the Sufferings, ſo alſo of the Conſolation,* παρακλησεως, which *Greek* Word, tho' ſignifying Comfort, does alſo by the Senſe of Chriſtian Antiquity includes and expreſs *Prophecy*, and indeed all the other Gifts: Inſomuch that we find manifold Inſtances of this Kind cited in the Second Part, in ſupernatural Comfort to the Attendants on the Martyrdom of *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Potamiana*, and the famous Martyrs of *Lyons*; and of many ſingle Perſons, ſtrengthen'd to paſs thro' their laſt Agonies, by the Support receiv'd in Viſions, Voices and the like. And however, Divine Conſolation is now-a-days limited to the ſecret Influences of the *Paracleet*, and the inſiſting on other Ways of God's conveying it, may ſeem to our Age even as great a Riddle and unaccountable, as our great Prophet's laying Clay upon the Eyes of the Blind, in Order to open them; yet it fully appears, that among Chriſtians it was not ſo from the Beginning neither ever ought we to have Dogmatiz'd in this Manner touching the Ways of God, or have preſcribed thus unto Him; ſeeing that the Servant is not greater than his Maſter, who as our Head had the Spirit above all Meaſure, and nevertheleſs was ſtrengthen'd by an Angel, both under his Conflict in the Wilderneſs and the Garden.

§ 24. Again, *Fourthly*, one of the particular Gifts of Prophecy was the interpreting of Scripture; and thus the Primitive

mitive Ages had the Holy Spirit to give the Senſe thereof diſtinctly; and tho' the preceeding Word of God may in ſome ſort be expounded by human Literature, yet no one can doubt, but the loweſt Degree of true Prophecy is a better Interpreter thereof, than the higheſt natural or acquired Abilities of Men. We have ſaid, and cited a great deal to this effect, in Part II. and therefore without recapitulating of it, or inſiſting upon the Dimneſs and Confuſion of Human Coments, viſible in the collective Sentiments of the Learned, we proceed to a Fifth Benefit of the Spirit of Prophecy, whenever God ſhall graciouſly felicitate his Church therewith; and that is, the Diſcovery of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart, whereby ſecret Sinners are either perſonally convinced to their Amendment, or laid open for the Warning and Admonition of others; which is doubtleſs to the Edification highly of the Body of Chriſt, and without which, cloſe Hypocrites, to the Scandal of Religion, can never be purged out of it.

§ 25. Another Benefit to the Church, was that *Sixthly*, of Exhortation by the Gift of Inſpiration; which, tho' naturally and neceſſarily, it could not work (as we are apt to think) any greater Effects than when proceeding from the force of Oratory, or the art of Reaſoning; yet it is ſaid of our Saviour, that the manner of his Teaching, was *as of one having Authority, and not as the Scribes.* In a leſs Degree therefore, where there is the manifeſtation of a Spirit in the Reprover and Exhorter, even on that account, there ſeems implied ſome greater Efficacy and Authority, in a moral Senſe, more likely to prevail, than the dead and jejune way of meer Ratiocination. Agreeably to which, and to confirm the ſame, we might here make ſeveral Obſervations in the *New Teſtament*, upon the Words, ενεργεια and ενεργουμενη, which properly imply a ſtrong Influence, as of the Agency of a Spirit ſupernaturally, and which are rendred *Efficacious*; as if the ſame carried in it an efficient and powerful Influence, where exerted. According to which Senſe, as if the prophetical Preaching was the higheſt Means poſſible to awaken and convert the Sinner, we may underſtand the Words of our Lord, *If they hear not* Moſes *and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded, tho' One roſe from the Dead*; for it is plain, that our Bleſſed Saviour could not there mean the Records of the antient Prophets, excluſive of the living Teſtimony of *Jeſus*, the Spirit of Prophecy it ſelf; becauſe that in ſuch an Acceptation, the *Jews* would have been fortified by that Text, againſt the hearing or attending

attending to those, whom He should send them. The like Prevalency also in Prophetick Preaching above the Human, is insinuated by the Apostle, *Gal.* iii. 1, 3. *O foolish* Galatians, *who hath infatuated you, that you should not obey the Truth, before whose Eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth* (possibly figurated by the Prophets, as) *crucified among you? Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the Flesh?* Wherein the Word, *Flesh*, is allowed by Commentators, to distinguish what is properly Human from the Spiritual and Prophetical. But finally, whilst we are speaking of the Moral means of Conviction, or the Conversion of Sinners, and that the Prophetical is more likely to prevail; that great Work however is solely the immediate Act of God, who does not always effect it even by the greatest Means; for the Prophets complain, *Who hath believ'd our report?* And our Lord's Ministry was not so effectual as that of his Apostles; nevertheless, the Ages of Christ's Presence, by the Spirit in the Church Prophetically, were most abounding in all Christian Vertues: Wherefore, according to my Judgment, both the Office of the Prophet and Teacher jointly, are most edifying to the Body of Christ, as by Divine appointment; *and the Head cannot say to the Foot, or the Eye to the Hand, we have no need of thee.*

§ 26. But, *Seventhly*, one Advantage to the Church in general of true Prophecy, whenever appearing, is, that the Spirit, the Guide in all Truth, does tend more to an Union of the Body of Christ, by suppression of Dissentions which are commonly built upon Human Opinion, than ever is like, by any other Means, to be produced without it; because He always reduces Things to their primary Institution, and his own original Intent in it; and the nearer we draw to a Center, the nearer to Union. And to this purpose, there has been a great deal said in Part II. and III. of this Tract, which I will not for Brevity sake here repeat; nor here add several other Advantages of enjoying a Divine Oracle, for particular Counsel and Direction in many Cases, both publick to a Church, and private to a Person, as there specified. But, *Lastly*, do remind the Reader of the constant Edification of the Spirit of Prophecy, in controuling and keeping down the most pernicious of all Delusions, *viz.* that of *Sadduciſm*, which, I fear, does universally prevail among us; and of this, many among the Clergy are deeply sensible, tho' there remains no Remedy that we know of, so effectually to redress it, as the new Discoveries of Himself, in the various Ways of Revelation, wherein

wherein God formerly was propitiously favourable to his Church. To Illustrate which, I hear add a small Specimen of Arguments out of the only Book, purposely of that Kind, which I have chanced to meet withal among our Countrymen, which is as followeth.

§ 27. A Book Entitled, *A Theological Discourse of Angels, by* Benjamin Camfield, *Rector of* Aylston *near* Leicester, *Anno* 1678. being a small Volume, contains to this effect; "The "Subject here insisted on, is so suitable to the Atheistical "and degenerate Age we live in, that the general Disbelief "of Spirits or Angels, may well be thought the *principal* "*Delusion* and chief Source of Lies in it; even the Ground "and Introduction of all that Irreligion and Profaneness, "which naturally enough follows upon this. 'Tis a Design "evidently comporting with the Subtilty and Malice of our "grand Adversary, to promote and countenance this Infide-"lity, in all the Parts and Branches of it; to the end, *he* "*may pass himself unsuspected*, whilst he thus at *once* destroys "the Object of our Worship and Adoration, roots up the "very Capacity of Vertue and Piety within us, quashes all "the Hopes and Fears of a World to come, and defeats "the End and Use of Ministers, whom Providence hath "order'd and commission'd for the present Discipline, Se-"curity, and Comfort of Christians; nor is the Success of "Satan's most pernicious Endeavours, on these Heads, in-"considerable; for the number of Men is not small, who "boldly contradict the many plain and repeated Declara-"tions of Scripture in these Points that concern Angels, "which Christians certainly ought to reverence; for, "there is a Generation of Men now, who endeavour to "have all Discourse and Enquiries about Angels and Spi-"rits, to pass for Old-Wives Fables, or at best the wa-"king Dreams of Persons idly disposed; nay, even those "who have been taught otherwise in the main, are yet apt "enough to look upon this Subject as a needless Curiosity, "a nice and barren Speculation. Now, what Shame is it "for us, that when the Sacred Scriptures have told us so "much, and plainly, of the good turns we receive continu-"ally from their Attendance and Ministry, and of the Ex-"cellencies of Angels, insomuch, that we Christians pro-"fess to expect the Happiness of being made like unto "them, and blessed hereafter in their Society; that we "should yet continue so profane and sceptical, and uncon-"cerned or indifferent, in our Belief, Esteem, Thoughts "and Speeches about them?

"§ 27. It

" § 28. It is common to find among Chriſtians, ſome that " will juſtify this Contempt and Unconcernedneſs of theirs, " about the Miniſtry of Angels in their behalf, ſaying, " That it is needleſs and ſuperfluous; ſeeing God is every " where at hand, and of Power unqueſtionably ſufficient, " to do all that for us, and much more too, than we can " deſire or look for to receive from them? Unto which I " anſwer, That we are not to make our ſelves Judges of " his Ways, nor is it requiſite we ſhould give a full and " adequate reaſon and account of them; but the knowledge " that we have of Him, forbids us to imagine that any of " his Conſtitutions and Appointments are in vain, and it is " a great Crime wilfully to overlook what He has been " pleas'd to reveal of them; the only Reaſon we know of " God's making the World, and the ſeveral ſorts of Beings " in it, was his own good Pleaſure; the like therefore we " with reſpect to the moſt excellent Order, Connexion, and " Subſervency of thoſe Beings each to other, which has, " by his Appointment, eſtabliſhed their mutual Depen- " dance and Operations. Thus, *they are all miniſtring Spi-* " *rits, ſent forth to miniſter to them, who ſhall be Heirs of Sal-* " *vation*, (or inherit it.) And upon the Text, in *Pſalm* civ. 4. " *Who maketh his Angels Spirits, his Miniſters a Flaming Fire*, " Dr. *Hammond* Paraphraſeth; *God, tho' He be able to do all* " *Things by Himſelf, even to adminiſter the whole World, as He* " *firſt created it, by a Word, by ſaying, and it was done; yet is* " *He pleaſed to make uſe of the Miniſtry of Angels over Men,* " *who, ſome of them, in ſubtil Bodies of Air*, (*or Wind*,) *others of* " *Fire, come down and execute his Commands here upon Earth;* " *and as Angels and Miniſters in this Text, are but ſeveral* " *Names of the ſame Divine Creatures, ſo Wind and Fire, are* " *but expreſſions of the ſeveral Appearances of them, ſometimes* " *Airy, ſometimes in a Flaming Cloud.* Wherefore, as the " Wind, which is but a ſtrong motion in the Air, and the " ſhining of flaming Fire, are two of the moſt agile and " operative Agents that are known to us in Nature; ſo the " Angels, and Chriſt's Miniſters, are ſtrong, quick, and " powerful in performing their Offices and Adminiſtrations " here.

" § 29. *Salvation* is the Scripture word for Happineſs " and Glory, even the Sum of all God's Promiſes to us, and " of all our Deſires and Longings, which in many Places " of the Text, is termed an Inheritance; therefore, thoſe " who overlook and ſlight the Miniſtry of Angels, with " reſpect to it, would do well, better to conſider that of

" *Heb.*

" *Heb.* i. 14. *they are all miniſtring Spirits unto Chriſt, ſent forth*
" *to miniſter unto thoſe*, who ſhall inherit *Salvation*; the
" Word in which Text, hath a primary reference to that
" Evil and Miſery, we are deliver'd from. Now, Man be-
" ing driven out of Paradice for his Rebellion, there was
" ſet *Cherubims and a flaming Sword, to keep him from the way*
" *of the Tree of Life*; and gracious and indulgent is our
" Heavenly Father, that there is a Way open'd of our re-
" entring into Paradice, and unto *the Tree of Life*; let us
" not then deſpiſe or find Fault with his Care in appointing
" his Angels to conduct us back thither, ſeeing they are ſent
" forth expreſly to miniſter unto thoſe who ſhall inherit
" *Salvation*. Having therefore ſuch a Guard as this about
" us, we are inexcuſably guilty of Ingratitude, if we ob-
" ſerve not herein our Heavenly Father's Love and Care to-
" wards us, ſo as to bleſs his Name for this very Provi-
" ſion, among his many other Mercies. For thus, moſt
" deſervedly, hath our Church appointed one Feſtival in
" the Year, for a ſolemn Commemoration of the Holy
" Angels, from whom we receive ſo great Advantages;
" our Church inſtructing of us then, to recognize the ad-
" mirable Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, in his ordain-
" ing of their Services, and by Prayer to Him, to ſeek
" the Bleſſing of their Miniſtration over us, as the excellent
" Collect for *Michaelmas* Day does direct.

" § 30. Seeing that we are then entitled to the benefit
" of their Services, all the excellent Qualities that the
" Scripture aſcribes to them, are to be eſteem'd our Advan-
" tages; when therefore they are deſcribed by emblems of
" Power, and ſaid *to excell in Strength*, we are to under-
" ſtand the ſame not in reference to Men, but Devils, and
" that they ſurpaſs the Evil Spirits, who are in ſome de-
" gree infatuated and enfeebled by their Wickedneſs. They
" are as a Flame of Fire for Agility and Force, as an Hoſt
" or Army for Number, as full of Eyes for Watchfulneſs, and
" reſt not from Imployment Day or Night; they are all
" ſubject to Chriſt, and ſome of them are called the Horns
" and Eyes of the Lamb. Agreeably to this, the *Hebrew*
" Rabbies ſtile the Angels, the Eyes of God, and ſo the
" Scripture is thought to call them alſo, in *Zech.* iv. 10.
" *Rev.* v. 6. wherefore St *Paul*, mentions the being made a
" Spectacle to Angels. And in *Eccleſ.* v. 6. *Say thou not be-*
" *fore the Angel*, is by the *Greek*, *Say thou not before the Face*
" *of God*, or his Preſence, προ προσωπε τε θεε. So that
" 1 *Tim.* v. 21. lays a Charge upon us, to expreſs an aw-

" ful

" ful Senſe of the Preſence of thoſe, our daily Inſpectors " and Attendants, and in *Heb.* xiii. 2. we are exhorted to " Hoſpitality, *leaſt unwittingly we ſhould reject them*; and " we ought, by *Pſalm* xxxiv. 7, 8. to have a lively Senſe " of the Goodneſs of God in their Miniſtration; for when " 'tis ſaid, *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them* " *that fear Him, and delivereth them*, it immediately follows, " *O taſte and ſee, that the Lord is good.* They are by many " places in Scripture, declared to be peculiarly Inſpectors " of Publick Worſhip, and the antient Chriſtians preſerv'd " the Apprehenſion of it, (as by Authors and Texts here " cited appears) even as the Cherubims in the Temple, by " Divine Appointment, were to ſhadow forth to us the " Preſence of Angels, Spectators of Publick Worſhip.

Unto which, let us add, what to this purpoſe Dr. *Scott* gives in his *Chriſtian Life*, p. 968; " Since our Saviour " aſſures us, *there is joy in the Preſence of the Angels of God* " *over one Sinner that repenteth*, Luke xv. 10. we cannot but " ſuppoſe, that ſo far as their own Ability, and the Laws " of the inviſible World will permit them, they do pro- " mote and further our Repentance; ſince in doing ſo, " they contribute to their own Joy, and ſince the Scripture " aſſures us, they are preſent in our Aſſemblies, we cannot " reaſonably ſuppoſe them to be preſent merely as idle Au- " ditors and Spectators, who have nothing elſe to do but " only to obſerve and gaze about upon our Holy Solem- " nities; and therefore we muſt conclude, that their great " buſineſs there, is to aſſiſt us in the performance of them, to " remove our Indiſpoſitions, and recollect our Wandrings, " to fix our Attention, to excite our Affections, and inflame " our Devotions.

§ 31. The ſame Author of the Theological Diſcourſe in reſpect to the *Sadducee*, illuſtrates the Exiſtence and Being of Angels from the rational Evidences of the Human Soul, and their Operations and Powers from the parallel ones in the Soul of Man; among which Philoſophical Reaſonings, he gives them the Properties of a diſtinct Will and Motion, and the ability to move other Things, ſo that as the Soul of Man moves his own Body, and other Things without, and extrinſick to it, in like manner the Holy Angels can effect the Soul and its internal Powers, as well as the Bodily Organs or Parts ſeverally of a Man. Agreeable to which Philoſophy, the early Writers that we have men- tion'd Part II. do deſcribe the Prophetick Spirit's Influence to that of a Muſician's touching a Harp or Spinnet, or as

we

we may ſay, making the Organ to ſpeak. But having in the Introduction, ſhew'd at large, that the Deſign of this Treatiſe is to argue entirely upon the foot of Revelation, and not to diſcuſs the fundamental Principles thereof, by the Syſtems of Philoſophy; nay, on the contrary, ſeeing that our main purpoſe is to expoſe the Iniquity of Chriſtians in ever ſuffering the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God, to ſtand arraigned before the Bar of undefinable Reaſon, we conceiving it to be no leſs, than in effect to make God to bow down to Man, and ſo to eſtabliſh Idolatry upon theſe accounts; we do omit any of the Arguments of that Kind, to be found in the ſaid Author, or others.

" § 32. Since the Times of Reformation, *Melancton* " gives an account in his Comment upon *Daniel* (ſays " *Camfield*) how he himſelf heard a Voice, and ſaw an " Angel Celeſtial, and appeals to many good Men and Mi- " niſters then alive, to avouch what attended it, concluding " in his Printed Relation of it, devoutly to this effect; " *Bleſs we God, that He adds his Angels for our Keepers, and* " *let us upon that account perform the Offices of our Miniſtry,* " *with the more aſſured and unconcerned Minds*; for, by the " means of this Viſion, *Grinæus*, a Learned and Pious Di- " vine, was preſerv'd from the violent hands of Perſecu- " tors, *Anno* 1529. *Bodinus* alſo, tells us of an Holy and " Pious Man, of his acquaintance, who had a certain Spi- " rit perpetually accompanying him, which conſtantly wa- " ked him in the Morning, and ſpake to this effect, *Who* " *gets firſt up to Pray?* This Spirit did continually forewarn " him of Dangers, admoniſh againſt Vices, exhort him to " Alms, and when he began to Praiſe God in Pſalms, " he was preſently raiſed and *ſtrengthen'd threin, with a ſpi-* " *ritual and ſupernatural Power*; that in ſecret Prayer, ask- " ing Counſel of God under difficulties and dangers by " Perſecution, he had ſeveral Times receiv'd an Anſwer by " Viſion and Voice, directing him for Good. A Third " Inſtance among the Reformed, is given us by *Cameron*, " a Divine of great Eminence, of one *Calignon*, the Chan- " cellor of *Navarre*, who was warned by an Angelick " Voice to retire with his Family out of Town, becauſe " that in a few days the Plague ſhould come upon it; and " ſays *Cameron*, this was certainly an Angel by the ſpecial " and gracious Favour of God, which ſpake to him, and " drew him out of the danger otherwiſe unavoidable.

§ 33. There might doubtleſs be found, a vaſt Number of like well warranted Accounts, of the Angels miniſtring

to

to the Heirs of Salvation, among thoſe of the Reformation, if there was but any Equitableneſs and Candour, in the Acceptation of them; but whilſt the Temper of the Teachers and Guides of the People, is bent and exerted more to the Suppreſſion of the antient Faith on this Subject, than that of Sadduciſm, Infidelity, and Deiſm; no wonder, that the latter is now grown rampant, and continually inſulting Chriſtianity it ſelf, by many Tracts publiſhed, to the moſt audacious Contempt of all reveal'd Religion. It is apparent, from the Treatiſes of this Kind, which daily come abroad, that the preſent Age does more abound with the overflowing of Ungodlineſs, than that of the laſt mention'd Author, *Anno* 1678: But before the late deplorable Civil War, there is a plain Teſtimony, that the Humour of Scoff and Ridicule on theſe Matters, of viſionary Revelation, was not ſuch; for a Book in Folio, entitled, *The Table Talk of Martin Luther*, examin'd and order'd then to be printed by both Houſes of Parliament, has a Preface by the Tranſlator, (as I remember) Mr. *Jacobſon*, our Envoy ſeveral Years in *Germany*; and in that Preface, it appears that he was commanded and enforced by an Angel, to tranſlate the ſaid Book: Now as he gave an Account of the Viſion, before the Committees of Parliament, the national Order for printing the ſame, fully ſhews that the Torrent of Sadduciſm, was not riſen ſo high, as this our preſent Age does evidence, on all Sides.

§ 34. But becauſe by the modern Way of Argument, the Words of *Heb.* i. 14. *are they not all miniſtring* λειτουργικα *Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter* εις διακονιαν *for them who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation*, are ſo conſtrued; that tho' the Miniſtration of Angels, for the private, perſonal, and particular Comfort or Direction of ſome, be allowable from it with Reſpect to Sadduciſm in general, yet the ſame will not be allowed from the Text, in behalf of Viſion and Prophecy, for the publick Edification of Chriſtian Aſſemblies. Therefore, is it neceſſary to obſerve, that the Word λειτουργια, properly ſignifies *the publick Office and Function* of the Prieſts under the Law, and by being transferr'd to the Goſpel-times, does preſerve the ſame Senſe of *a publick Miniſtry* in the Church, as in *Acts* xiii. 2. it is uſed; the other *Greek* Word alſo is commonly in the New Teſtament uſed, and tranſlated by us to refer unto the Vocation of the Common Paſtors of the Church. Wherefore, when we conſider that by *Heb* i. 6, 7. the Angels are declared to worſhip Chriſt, and to be his Miniſters, in a publick

Manner, like to the Wind and flaming Fire or Lightning; and that our Lord Himself says, *Rev.* xxii. 16. *I Jesus have sent mine Angel, to testify unto you these Things in the Churches*; and if we add, that the Word, *Angel*, signifying a *Messenger*, is applied sometimes in Scripture to the Prophet, as touching *John Baptist* it is said, *Mal.* iii. 1. *Behold I will send my Angel*, or Messenger; and in *Judges* ii. 1, 4. the Angel or Messenger of the Lord, is by Divines thought to be a Prophet, because he is said to come from *Gilgal*, and to speak to all the Children of *Israel*: Thus also the Word *Malachi*, in *Hebrew*, signifying an Angel, is by the Rabbins not understood to be the Name of a Man, but to intimate a Prophet unnamed. There are other Texts to the like Import, as that of *Rev.* ii. 1. *The Angel of the Church* in *Ephesus*, intimates the prophetical President there; for in *Rev.* x. 9--11. An Angel, the *Messenger immediate* of Christ, delivers to *John* a Book to eat up, which was symbolical of Prophecy, and thereby *John* became the *Messenger* of Christ, *mediate* to the Churches, to bear unto them the Testimony of Jesus. Upon all this duly consider'd, we can see no Reason, why their Ministration should be excluded a Place in publick Propheſyings, seeing in this Text *Heb.* i. 14. it is beyond any Limitation of Time, extended to all that *shall be* Heirs of Salvation. And to what already is said in Part i. Chap vi. upon this Head, I here only add that of Dr. *Scot's* Christian Life, *p.* 956, 957. " most " of those prophetick Messages, which God from Time to " Time sent to the World, were conveyed to the Prophets " by the Ministry of Angels, as appears by many Places " both of the Old and New Testament; and it was an an- " tient and Catholick Doctrine among the *Jews*, that all " Prophecy was communicated by the Mediation of An- " gels; accordingly we find our Saviour sending forth his " Holy Angels, on prophetical Messages to his Church. " And they may be so still sent from Heaven to inspire our " Minds with some useful Secret.

§ 35. The open Upbraiders of Revelation, do charge God foolishly with having always *spoken by it in a Corner*; and the Ground of this Imputation lies in great Measure, in the universal Ignorance of that publick Prophecy, allowed by the Churches of Christ throughout *Asia*, *Africa*, and *Europe*, for several Centuries, as I have shewed in the Second Part. Certainly therefore, if there had never been Ears to listen to what the Spirit said unto the Churches, the Rulers of Darkness in this World, would have one stronger

ſtronger Argument, againſt Evangelical Light than with the Remembrance of it; therefore the Record of theſe Things, and the publick Acknowledgment of them, we do conceive does highly tend, to the Advancement of the Honour and Kingdom of our Divine and Royal Maſter on Earth. The true and ſcriptural Denomination of Prophecy, if it had been always retain'd, and a Regard to all the ſeveral Ways of God revealing preached; the Faith of Divine Teſtimonies, would never have ebbed ſo low, that open Infidels, the Sons of *Belial* could have been, much leſs abound in the ſame Communion, with the Members of Chriſt. But if inſtead of needful Oppoſitions, to the Tide of Infidelity, the Goſpel Miniſtry will never come to any juſt Definition of what was Prophecy, or ſubmit themſelves to the Text, concerning the Authority of the Spirit revealing; but on the contrary, many of them do aſſert themſelves Prophets, and call their human Preaching, *Prophecy*; I leave unto a new Reflection that of *Jer.* v. 31. *the Prophets propheſy falſly, and the Prieſts bear Rule by their Means, and my People love to have it ſo: And what will ye do in the End thereof?* For we have already cited from Dr. *Nicholas*, in the firſt Chapter of this Fourth Part, that the overflowings of Ungodlineſs in this Kind, threaten a Deluge of God's Judgments upon our Land and Nation, the moſt direful.

§ 36. Many of the Clergy now-a-days are indeed deeply ſenſible of our Danger from Deiſm and a Contempt of all Reveal'd Religion, and we could enumerate many of them by Name, who deplore it and labour in ſome Kind of Methods to ſtemn the threatning Tide, by the Sermons printed of the Lecture, founded by the Honourable Mr. *Boyle*: But with Reſpect to Sadduciſm, or Disbelief of the Agency of Angels in Divine Revelation, *Acts* xxiii. 9. in general treated of throughout this Book, upon the Foundation of ſacred Writ, and the Authority of the primitive Churches of Chriſt, I am able to find but very little, and even next to nothing of theirs, as appears by the ſmall Citations of that Kind, made in this Tract; and as to Mr. *Boyles*'s Lectures, tho' I have read about Twenty, I find nothing at all. Wherefore, if the ſecret Contempt and Disbelief of Spirits, be the very Root and Ground of Deiſm as I conceive it to be; it may well deſerve the more mature Conſideration of our Paſtors, whether any Means without ſtriking at the Root, by urging the Principles of a Scripture Faith in ſuch Things, are likely to overthrow the Growth and wide ſpreading of ſo contagious a Cala-

mity. But having at large explain'd my ſelf already upon this Head, from a ſincere Deſire and Purſuit of the manifeſt Glory of God, and the chief Spiritual Good of Men, according to the beſt Knowledge of the Will of God, and my own Duty; I ſhall add no more than the Explanation the Criticks in the *Synoyſis*, give us of *Acts* xxiii. 9. wherein it is ſaid, if the efficient, a *Spirit*, which ſignifies (here the Effect, ſays *Beza, viz.*) a Prophetical Revelation, or a certain Impreſſion, or *Afflatus*, after a wonderful Manner penetrating the Mind; *or an Angel*, that is, ſay others, by Dream, Viſion or Voice heard, *hath ſpoken to him, let us not fight againſt God.* And as to the Word, πνευμα, rendred a *Spirit*, it means as well a *Wind*; in Alluſion to which, Dr. *Scot* inſiſting on our Saviour's conſtant and habitual, unceaſing Inſpiration, ſays, *Other Prophets were like the mute and dormant Pipes of an Organ, only at ſuch certain Times when the Spirit breathing into them, gave an Utterance to their vocal Organs.*

CHAP. IV.

The CONCLUSION.

§ 1. MR. *Lock's Eſſay* concerning *Human Underſtanding*, in treating upon the diſtinct Provinces of *Faith* and *Reaſon*, tells us, "All Propoſitions, whereof the Mind "by the Uſe of its Natural Faculties, can come to deter- "mine and judge, from *natural acquired Ideas*, are Matter "of *Reaſon*. But there are other Things, that falling not "under the Reach of our Senſes, they are not capable of "Teſtimony (or Demonſtration to *Reaſon*) and ſuch are the "Exiſtence, *Nature and Operations of finite immaterial Be- "ings without us*, as Spirits, Angels, Devils, *&c.* But "whatſoever God has revealed, comes within the Domi- "nion of Faith, and that without any Violence or Hin- "drance to *Reaſon*; and whatſoever is Divine Revelation, "ought to over-rule all our Opinions, Prejudices and In- "tereſts, and hath a Right to be receiv'd with a full Aſ- "ſent: Such a Submiſſion as this of our *Reaſon* to Faith, "takes not away the Boundaries of Knowledge: This

"ſhakes

" ſhakes not the Foundations of *Reaſon*, but leaves us that " Uſe of our Faculties, for which they were given us."

§ 2. Thus therefore, what we have ſaid touching the Reaſonableneſs, that our Underſtandings ought to be determined by the Authority of Scripture, in every Point therein revealed clearly; cannot juſtly be taxed with any Injury done to the human Intellect and Reaſon. But we wiſh all Men profeſſing Chriſtianity, would as they are bound to do by it, eſteem that this Modeſty of their Underſtanding, in learning of Wiſdom from the Spirit of Chriſt, were rather a true Ennoblement than Degradation of their natural Endowments. Nevertheleſs, in every Thing not concluded by the Word of God, Men are ſtill to judge by their *Reaſon*, touching whatſoever is ſet before them; and that the natural Light of *Reaſon*, may exerciſe all its due Priviledges without Obſtruction, I ſubmit to the Reader's Conſideration, another Paſſage of the ſame Author, touching *wrong Aſſent, or Error.*

§ 3. " Every one ought carefully to beware what he " admits for a *Principle*, but to examine it ſtrictly, and " ſee whether he certainly knows it to be true of it ſelf " by its own Evidence, or whether he does only with Aſ- " ſurance believe it to be ſo, upon the Authority of others. " For he who hath imbibed *wrong Principles*, and has blind- " ly given up himſelf to any Opinion, in it ſelf not evi- " dently true, hath a ſtrong Byaſs put into his Underſtand- " ing, which will unavoidably miſguide his Aſſent, and " lead to Error. There is nothing more ordinary, than " that Children ſhould receive into their Minds, Propoſiti- " ons *eſpecially about Matters of Religion*, from their Parents, " Nurſes or thoſe about them; which being inſinuated in- " to their unwary Underſtandings, and faſtned there by " Degrees, are at laſt *equally, whether true or falſe*, riveted " in them by long Cuſtom and Education, beyond all Poſ- " ſibility almoſt of being pulled out again. For Men, " when they are grown up, reflecting upon their Opini- " ons, as antient in their Minds as their very Memories, " are apt to reverence them as ſacred Things as if ſuch " *Principles* ought not to be ſearched into, tried or queſti- " on'd; on the contrary, theſe are ſet up in their Minds, " as the ſupreme and unerring *Deciders* of Truth and Fal- " ſhood, and the *Judges* to which they are to appeal in all " Manner of Controverted Points and Caſes. Thus then, " this Opinion of *his Principles, let them be what they will* " (in a *Romaniſt*, an educated *Enthuſiaſt*, or any other Sect)

" being once eſtabliſhed in any Man's Mind; it is eaſy to " be imagined what Reception any Propoſition ſhall find, " how clearly ſoever proved, that ſhall invalidate their Au- " thority, or at all thwart with theſe Internal Oracles.

§ 4. " *Secondly*, Next to theſe Principles of wrong Aſ- " ſent or Error, imbibed as it were, with the Mother's " Milk, there are Men whoſe Underſtandings are caſt into " a Mold, and faſhion'd juſt to the Size of *ſome receiv'd* " *Hypotheſis*. And it would be an unſufferable Thing for a " learned Profeſſor, and that which his Scarlet would bluſh " at, to have his Authority of Forty Years ſtanding, " wrought out of hard Rock *Greek* and *Latin*, with no " ſmall Expence of Candle, and confirmed by a general " Tradition, and a reverend Beard, in an Inſtant to be " overturned by an Upſtart Noveliſt; and he be made to " confeſs, that what he taught his Schollars Thirty Years " ago, was all Error and Miſtake. And

" *Thirdly*, There is another Sort of Men, who do not " admit of Conviction, nor yield unto manifeſt Reaſons, " even in a Caſe where the real Probabilities appear, and " are plainly laid before them; and this is, when thoſe " Probabilities do croſs Men's *Appetites, and prevailing Paſ-* " *ſions*. For, let never ſo much Probability hang on one " Side of a covetous Man's Reaſoning, and Money on the " other, and it is eaſy to foreſee which will outweigh. " And tho' Men cannot always openly gainſay, or reſiſt the " Force of manifeſt Probabilities, that make againſt them, " yet they will not yield to the Argument. Not but that " it is the *Nature of the Underſtanding*, conſtantly to cloſe " with the more probable Side; but yet a Man hath a " Power to ſuſpend and reſtrain the Enquiries of his Un- " derſtanding; and when his Intereſt and Paſſions do ſway " him, he will not permit his Mind a full and ſatisfactory " Examination, ſo far as the Matter in Queſtion will bear, " and perhaps requires."

§ 5. We hope then, that in the Current of this Treatiſe, where we have refuſed an Appeal to *human Reaſon*, becauſe the Particulars were already concluded by Divine Revelation, and becauſe the Nature and Operations of Spirits or Angels are allowed to be exempted from its Judicature; we hope, I ſay, that by this Courſe, there is no Injury done to the Nature and Quality of Man's Abilities. As to what properly comes within their Verge, touching any Prophetical Appearances, we leave it to be examined by the moſt exquiſite Rules of Probability, for the Diſcovery and Shame

of

of all counterfeit and Impoſture, that any other Matter is uſually debated and determined by. And certainly there are many outward Circumſtances, attending on the Prophet, which are open to the Enquiry and Debate of natural Reaſon (either ſimply conſider'd, or as the ſame is exerciſed in comparing Spiritual Things with Spiritual) which may aſſiſt a Diſcovery of the Certainty, or moral Evidence of the Revelation made to him. So that, all that is debarred to reaſoning, is, that becauſe Divine Revelation muſt ſtand upon its own Divine Teſtimony, and the Number of Witneſſes thereof recorded in Scripture, and in Ages ſince, by very good Rules of Argument are ſufficient Inſtances to confirm it; the Foundations of Faith are not to be ſhaken, or allowed to be deſtroyed, by an undefined Liberty of Reaſoning; but becauſe we are not willing to be thought to exclude the Benefit of *Reaſon*, ſo far as it may be duly exerciſed, as the Apoſtle ſays, *the Law is good, if a Man uſe it lawfully*; we here further ſubjoin ſome Regulations preſcribed to it, in a Book entitled, *the Reaſonableneſs of Scripture Belief*, by Sir *Charles Wolſeley*, Baronet.

§ 6. "As to the Unreaſonableneſs of *Atheiſm*, ſays he, "*p.* 33. *Supernatural Religion* is a thing propoſed to Men "with Reaſon abundantly ſufficient, to ſatisfy a Man *rea-* "*ſonably willing* to be ſatisfy'd, and to leave him without "Excuſe if he be not ſatisfyed. And beſides, all other "Proofs of it, the ſame human Evidence, by which we "reſt ſatisfied in all other Things that we do not ſee, "deſcends to all Ages; tho' not with Anſwers to every "froward Oppoſer's Objections, that will diſpute without "End againſt the Truth of it, becauſe he diſlikes the Sub-"ject thereof. He that will give no Credit to any divine "Revelation, unleſs God will ſatisfy his *perſonal Curioſity* "*in the Manner of its Conveyance*, does in Effect ſay, tho' "here be abundant Proof to make good any Thing I have "a Mind to receive, yet I will not believe Him unleſs "I pleaſe, *p.* 23. The Contempt that has been caſt upon "the Scriptures, *and all ſupernatural Revelation*, has open'd "a wide Door to *Atheiſm*; for Men in our Days above "all others, have ſo *kicked at what is ſupernatural*, and ſo "much queſtion'd and doubted thoſe Things, and *the Man-*"*ner of their Conveyance to the World*, that they have at "laſt combated their natural Light, and denied the Truth "of a Deity. The *Jews* found a Way to evade the Mi-"racles of Chriſt, and to father them upon the Power of "the Devil, and he that now calls for *Ocular and Mathe-*

" *matical* Demonſtrations, or elſe he will look upon all ſu-
" pernatural Revelation as a fabulous Story; tis as much
" as to ſay, he will not believe thoſe Things, unleſs he
" have ſuch Proofs of them, as are impoſſible to be had,
" and *the Nature of them will not bear*; which is all one as
" to ſay, he is poſitively reſolved beforehand, not to believe
" them at all.

§ 7. " All Belief in an ordinary Way of Things Di-
" vine, (*p.* 419.) muſt of Neceſſity be ultimately reſolved
" into that, we call *rational and moral Aſſurance*; for
" when we ſpeak of *Divine Faith*, we mean ſuch a Faith
" as is built upon a Divine Teſtimony immediate, and
" ſo taking its Denomination from the Foundation and
" Ground of it, the Teſtimony Prophetical. Now this *Di-*
" *vine Faith*, in that beſt and trueſt Senſe of it, will be re-
" duced into no more than a *Moral Aſſurance* at laſt;
" for, if I am asked, by what Means I came to know
" that Teſtimony to be Divine, that Queſtion muſt needs
" bring me back to *a moral Aſſurance*, as the Ground of all
" my previous Belief, about that Divine Teſtimony it
" ſelf, that it really is ſo. Whatſoever Revelation God
" makes of his Mind to me, I muſt needs without Di-
" vine Aſſiſtance, receive it upon *human*, and in themſelves
" *fallible* Terms, and ſo judge of it as I judge of all other
" Things. No Man can receive any Revelation from
" God, with a Faith as infallible as the Revelation is in
" it ſelf, unleſs there be *an equal Inſpiration* in both Caſes,
" and God make Men thereby as infallible in *judging* of
" Revelation when propos'd, as he made the Inſtruments
" of it in *the Act of its Conveyance*. The plain Queſtion
" in this Caſe is, how I come to receive all other Things
" into my Belief, that are Objects of Belief? The Anſwer
" whereof is, that it muſt be confeſſed to be, upon the
" Grounds of *rational Credibility and moral Aſſurance*; and
" therefore upon the ſame Terms muſt I believe *all Things*
" *Divine and Supernatural*; nor could any Man receive
" any Revelation, upon any higher Terms than that we
" call Moral Aſſurance, and human Credibility. Nay, if
" I receive it upon any Motives *internal*, yet I muſt of
" Neceſſity without extraordinary Inſpiration, judge of
" ſuch internal Teſtimony, by *moral Conſiderations*, and
" from *human and rational Argumentation* within my ſelf,
" and thereby come at laſt to a Concluſion about it.
" From *Moſes* unto *Malachi*, the Inſpiration of none of all
" the Writers in the Old Teſtament, was built upon the

" Atte-

" Atteſtation of Miracles wrought by them, at leaſt the " Holy Ghoſt has not ſignified it in the Text; and even " thoſe that lived in the Apoſtles Times, who ſaw their " Miracles, and heard the Doctrine deliver'd from their " Mouths, were yet (without Inſpiration perſonal) upon " *human and fallible* Terms of judging and believing; be- " cauſe thoſe *Mediums* by which they did judge and be- " lieve, were in their own Nature ſuch. For, 'tis not a " Thing in it ſelf infallibly certain, but that any Man may " be miſtaken in the Judgment he makes of a Miracle." And as to this Caſe of Miracles, tho' we have largely inſiſted on it already, we ſhall add here, that its apparent the *Jewiſh* Church did not inſiſt on them as the neceſſary Attendances, much leſs the Pre-requiſites of a Prophet; for tho' *John* wrought no Miracle, yet 'tis ſaid, *all Men believ'd him to be ſuch.* Thus alſo, Jeſus being *driven by the Spirit into the Wilderneſs*, and returning thence *in the Power of the Spirit into Galilee*, He called his Diſciples, and they left their Vocations, and followed him, before his firſt Miracle at *Cana.*

§ 8. Now to make it appear further manifeſt, that there is no Deſign in this Treatiſe, to deny the full and free Uſe of Reaſoning upon the Occaſion of any prophetical Appearance, further than the Sovereign Laws of God have already determined us. But on the contrary, the main Purport hereof being but to plead for a fair Hearing and equitable Trial, in ſuch a Caſe; that whenever Things of a ſupernatural Kind do ariſe, they may be examined with the ſame Equity and candid Deliberation, that the Clergy themſelves do rightfully demand from the Sceptical and Profane, for their proving of Scripture Revelation; we ſubmit the Management of ſuch Trial to what Dr. *Goodman* in his *Winter Evening Conference*, tells the Atheiſt, *viz.* " That in Order to the Succeſs of a Debate " upon Revelation, ſome few reaſonable Things ought to " be allow'd of, as Preliminaries, *Part* III. *p.* 61. In the " firſt Place, that all Drollery ſhould be wholly laid aſide, " in the Management of this Cauſe, not only becauſe the " Buſineſs is too weighty and ſolemn, to be lightly and tri- " flingly dealt withal; but eſpecially becauſe that wan- " ton Trick of Drollery, is the only Engine in the " World, that can do Miſchief to Religion. But there is " no Fence againſt this Flail of profane and ſcurrilous " Buffoonry, which is able to render not only the wiſeſt " Man in the World, but the moſt ſolid and ſubſtantial

" Truth

" Truth ridiculous: Therefore, ſpeculative Atheiſts are " commonly well gifted this way, and the beſt of their " Game is to put off that with a Jeſt, which they can " never anſwer with all the Wit they have.

" § 9. Another reaſonable Demand is, ſays he to the Scep- " tick, (*Secondly,*) That you will not doubt or deny any thing, " without aſſigning ſome Reaſon or Cauſe for doing ſo; " for beſides that, otherwiſe the Humour of Doubting is " endleſs and infinite, and a Man may at this rate, doubt " and deny the Things that are moſt evident in Nature; " beſides this, I ſay, to doubt and deny thus groundleſly and " licentiouſly, or peeviſhly, is not ſo much properly to " doubt, as plainly to ſhew an Unwillingneſs we have, that " the Thing we diſpute about, ſhould be true: Therefore, " there is certainly a Modeſty in our Carriage, due in all " Diſputes, *eſpecially upon Revelation*, and it is not allowable " to be carping or captious, or to make uſe of little Tricks " and Shifts, to evade and put off an Argument, inſtead of " anſwering it. And this I have obſerv'd to be the uſual " method of the Adverſaries of Religion; they will put a " Man to prove every Thing, even the moſt ſelf evident " Propoſition, and one Queſtion ſhall beget another, and " that, a Third and a Fourth, only to perplex the Cauſe, " and to ſtave off the Concluſion; or when a Man hath " given very reaſonable evidence of the Point, they will " yet put it off with *it may be otherwiſe*, as if nothing could " be true, but what is impoſſible to be otherwiſe; which is " abſurd to the utmoſt Degree.

" § 10. A Third Demand, which is very reaſonable, is, " That you will be willing to believe, if you ſee Reaſon " for it; for it is a mighty Miſtake, to think that any Ar- " guments whatſoever can be ſufficient to make a Man be- " lieve whether he will or no. Nay, it is a great queſtion, " whither God Almighty can make a Man believe againſt " his Will; indeed, it ſeems a contradiction to ſuppoſe it, " but in an Human way, it is plainly impoſſible. And " there is (*Fourthly,*) another miſtake, in thoſe who are " Strangers to theſe Matters, and which hath the fatal Miſ- " chief to confirm a great many in Atheiſm, that is, that " they expect to jump into the full Underſtanding of (the " Myſtery of Faith) Religion preſently, whenſoever they " make it the Subject of their Diſcourſe; and if it be not " decided in one Syllogiſm or two, they immediately begin " a Triumph, and conclude it is a thing which cannot be " proved at all by Reaſon.

" § 11. As

" § 11. As to rational Evidence for revealed Religion, " (ſays Dr. *Goodman* to the Sceptick, Part II. p. 158.) we " are to enquire (*Fifthly*,) what meaſure or degree of ratio- " nal Evidence you will be ſatisfied with; for, there are " ſome Men who highly pretend to a readineſs to believe " upon juſt Grounds, but when it comes to Trial, they are " humourſom and captious; they will require ſuch evi- " dence as the Nature of the thing cannot admit of, even " ſuppoſing it to be true; for, they expect ſuch Proof as " ſhall leave no room for Cavil and Exception, ſuch as a " Man can find no evaſion from, but ſuch as will extort an " Aſſent from him, whether he will or no. Now I muſt " tell you, this is very hard and unreaſonable in any Caſe " whatſoever; foraſmuch as it is the eaſieſt thing in the " World to find Shifts and Cavils, inſomuch that he muſt " believe very little indeed that will admit of nothing, " which ſome ſlight Objection or other may be made againſt. " God Himſelf hath provided no Remedy for that kind of " Contumacy; and ſuch Men muſt go on and periſh without " Cure, for no Argument can eſcape a captious Humour.

" § 12. Beſides, if ſuch ſtrict Demands of Satisfaction " were at any time allowable, yet can they be by no means " reaſonably inſiſted on, in ſuch a Caſe, as this of reveal'd " Religion; for if ſuch irreſiſtible evidence were to be had in " this Matter, there would be no room for Vertue; it would " then be a neceſſary action to believe, and no inſtance of " Choice, nor any Argument of a Vertuous Mind: For " what can be the Praiſe or Rewardableneſs of that, " which a Man cannot chooſe but do? or what Excellency " is there in Faith, when there is no Pretence for Unbelief?

" § 13. Therefore, all that you can juſtly and wiſely ex- " pect in the preſent Caſe, is, that there be ſufficient " ground given you for a diſcreet Choice; and *Overweight* " enough in one Scale, to incline the Judgment of a pru- " dent Man ſo far, that he ſhall ſee it *more reaſonable to be- " lieve, than not to do it*. This is very properly to be eſteem'd " a Rule for the Conviction of our Reaſon; this is the juſt " Standard of Prudence, and this is the Principle that Wiſe " Men govern themſelves by in weighty Affairs. But let me " put you in mind of one Thing more, which is, that whilſt " Arguments are weighing, you will promiſe to hold the " Scales even, otherwiſe an *Overweight* in either of them, " will not be diſcernable; my meaning is, that you agree " to be ſincerely indifferent, and as willing to believe on " the one ſide, as on the other; for, whilſt a Man retains a

" partial

" partial Fondneſs for *an Opinion*, it is not all the Arguments " in the World ſhall beat him out of it; becauſe he will ſee " all that which makes for him, as thro' a *Magnifying-Glaſs*, " and ſo think it great and conſiderable, but on the contra- " ry, all that which is againſt him, ſhall ſeem little and " deſpicable. Wherefore, when a Man comes to this recti- " tude and equity of Mind, that he is as content that one ſide " ſhould be true as the other, *then, and not till then*, the beſt " Reaſon will carry it. So that in ſum, if there be Reſo- " lution and Prejudice, againſt what I am to ſay to you, that " will be *Armour of proof* againſt all the Arguments poſſible " to be brought, and we had e'en as good ſtay here, as go " further and loſe our Labour.

§ 14. I have made this Citation, principally to ſhew, that the Account given in the Introduction of the Reaſonableneſs of Faith in Divine Revelation, given out at any Time by the Prophet, might appear here in the cloſe of this Treatiſe, to be approved by the Clergy; and alſo, that ſeeing they judge it reaſonable for the moſt Atheiſtical and Sceptical Perſons, to lay aſide all manner of Partiality in the Will, Byaſs of Inclination, and Prejudice from Preconceptions, in order to a rational Aſſent to Truths, conveyed by immediate Revelation; one would think upon this ground, that it is not ſuppoſable, but they themſelves alſo will ſhew an Example of that Ingenuity in Temper, which they have ſo judiciouſly required from others; and now, after theſe regulations of the exerciſe of our Reaſon, touching the ways of the Spirit of God revealing, we proceed to draw up a ſummary Recollection of the State of Argument in this Book.

§ 15. Having under the Fourth Doctrinal Article of this Part and elſewhere exhibited (as I conceive) abundant Grounds from Scripture, for all Chriſtians to expect and hope that the Spirit of Prophecy will be again poured out, eſpecially as we draw on towards that happy Period, wherein the Mother of the Abominations of the Earth (whereof all Nations have drank,) ſhall be viſited with Plagues as ſhe deſerves, becauſe ſhe hath been drunk with the Blood of thoſe Meſſengers whom the Lord of the Vineyard did ſend her; here let us obſerve, that this being charged as the principal Particular of her Guilt, we are warned not to be partakers of her Sins that we may not receive of her Plagues, but to come out of her, that is, renounce thoſe Principles that have made her ſo odious in the Eyes of Him who is Judge; and then, when the King of Kings ſhall in Righteouſneſs, judge and make War, we ſhall partake of

that

that Joy wherewith the Heaven, and the Holy Apoſtles and Prophets ſhall rejoice, when God avengeth them on her, *Rev.* xviii. 20. I could have further proved the future Exiſtence of Prophecy, from ſome of the Modern Learned Commentators; and were I to have entred upon the glorious Things ſpoken throughout the Scripture, of the laſt Triumphs of the Lamb, of the reverſionary Felicities of *Zion*, and the exulting joy of all Nations, in the latter Day, even ſuch certainly as have not yet been accompliſhed; the proofs of Divine Promiſes, for the Effuſion of the Spirit ſtill to come on his Church, would have been much more multiplied; but, this of the future Glory of the Spouſe made ready, and the *Jeruſalem* from Heaven being a Theam too large for the preſent Treatiſe, we content our ſelves to have ſaid ſo much on the other Point without it, as may juſtly ſerve to awaken Men from their fooliſh Preſumption, that there neither has been ſince the Apoſtles, or is, or ever can be hereafter, an exiſtence of the Spirit of Prophecy; and of conſequence, that every Man may at any Time judge in ſuch a Caſe, without Fear, or Wit, ſafely, it being now preſumed for a vain Panick in the *Phariſees*, when they imagined any Danger of fighting againſt God, ſuppoſing an Angel to ſpeak, *Acts* xxiii. 9.

§ 16. But certainly, it is a thing marvellous to obſerve how diligently Men have been univerſally taught to believe that there has been no Revelation from Chriſt to his Churches, ſince the Age of the Apoſtles; for was there no plain Records to the contrary, one would think it might have ſufficed, for the Teachers of others, to ſay nothing poſitive on that Head; but for them to aſſert a Negative of that, whereof ſo multiplyed Proof is evident and eaſie for them to come to the Knowledge of, has ſomething in it ſo myſterious, as loudly calls out to us, to beware of liſting in a Confederacy againſt a Truth to the laſt degree manifeſt, and ſo glorious to our Saviour. If indeed the Matter was merely a point of Speculation and Hiſtorical, without effects attending of much Moment, it might be ſilently cover'd, under the Suppoſitions of meer Ignorance, or perſonal Raſhneſs; but when we find the Streſs of many Inferences and Concluſions built upon it, ſurely no Lover of Truth, and ſincere Conſulter of the Honour of his Lord, can blame the Writer hereof, for ſetting before him a Cloud of Witneſſes to it, induſtriouſly, for the moſt part, concealed in the Cloſets of the Learned, and locked up in Languages not commonly underſtood.

§ 17. But

§ 17. But the exiſtence of the Spirit prophetical of Chriſt, in many Churches after the Age of the Apoſtles, unto the Year 150. is evident from the Tracts of *Barnabas*, *Clement*, and *Hermas*, *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*; wherein the ſame is expreſſed to be then remarkable in ſeveral Countries; and the Biſhop of *Lincoln*'s Preface aſſerts, That the Gifts of the Spirit were then common unto all ſorts of Perſons; and during the ſame Time, *Euſebius* acquaints us, with *Quadratus*, *Papias*, the Four Daughters of *Philip*, and *Anna* a Woman of *Philadelphia*, who enjoyed alſo the like Grace of Chriſt, Part II. *Chap.* ii, iii. From the Year 150. to the Year 200. we have the like account of *Melito* Biſhop of *Sardis* from *Euſebius*; a large Declaration to the ſame purpoſe by *Juſtin Martyr*, by *Athenagoras*, by the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vienne*; and *Irenæus* declares the Miraculous Powers of the Spirit, to continue univerſarly unto the End of the Second Century, Part II. *Chap.* iii.

§ 18. For the duration of the like Spirit of Prophecy with the Church, during the Third Century, even unto the End of it, we have Proof from *Clemens* of *Alexandria*; from the anonimous Author of the *Martyrology of* Perpetua *and* Felicitas; as alſo, from *Euſebius* very largely in ſeveral Inſtances; and from *Tertullian*, *Theophilus*, *Minutius Felix*, *Origen*, *Dionyſius* Biſhop of *Alexandria*, *Cyprian* Biſhop of *Carthage*, *Arnobius*, *Lanctantius*, *Julius Firmicus*, and others; as appears at large, Part II. Chap. iv. intermixed with which, we have the explanatory and further confirming Remarks of Dr. *Whitby*, Dr. *Hicks*, Mr. *Dodwell*, *Rigaltius*, and others.

§ 19. It appearing therefore thus, from a conſentanious Harmony of a Number, and in a Manner all the notable Writers of the pureſt Ages of Chriſtianity, that the Church did enjoy Communications immediate from Heaven, by numerous Inſtances ſtill ſurviving to us, of Viſions, Dreams, Voices from Heaven, and the Gift of Prophecy eſteem'd then as Signs and Wonders wrought by the Holy Ghoſt; inſomuch, that the moſt deſpiſed Way of Revelation, *viz.* by Dream, was ſo much eſteem'd during theſe Ages, that *it was uſual* (ſays Rigaltius) *for the Fathers in the Chriſtian Church, to ſignify to one another, by Letters publickly to be read, the Dreams which they ſeverally had.* Which alſo appears beyond Contradiction, by the frequent Relations at large of Viſion and Dream, communicated by *Cyprian* to ſeveral Churches, with Exhortations founded thereupon,

§ 20. As

§ 20. As to thoſe of the Clergy, who are ignorant of the aboveſaid State of Things, during the Second and Third Century, and who have raſhly ſpoken of thoſe Ages, the contrary to what is moſt undoubtedly true of them, let them now at length recollect themſelves; otherwiſe, it will be to their own manifeſt Peril from the Eyes of the God of Truth, who hateth all Inſincerity, and Diſguiſes to pervert it; if they continue preſumptiouſly to inculcate to the People, what has no Exiſtence in Fact, but from their own paſſionate and culpable Deſires, that it were as true, as indeed it is falſe; that, *all Revelation to the Churches, and in particular, that of Prophetick Inſpiration, ceaſed with the Age of the Apoſtles.*

§ 21. On the other Side; whereas we are well aſſured, that the more learned Part of that Body, who are ſet over us for the Inſtruction of the People, are fully acquainted with the Import of the Second Part of this Treatiſe; we cannot but hope that the Pattern of the primitive Church (repreſented as above by the brighteſt Luminaries of it,) in honouring, beleiving and giving Heed to, the Preſence and Abode of Chriſt with her Prophetically, by heavenly Dreams, Voices, Viſions and Prophecy; will upon more mature Deliberation, excite their Emulation of thoſe venerable Perſons and Times, crowned with an Army of Martyrs, and noble Confeſſors of the Truth in Jeſus. And this we have the more Confidence of, becauſe they know, that the Contempt of theſe ſupernatural Things, has brought Anarchy and Confuſion into the very Faith of Chriſtians, and overſpread the Church with a Deluge of *Sadduciſm* and *Semi-ſadduciſm* more than *Jewiſh*, and *Scepticiſm*, *Deiſm*, and *Atheiſm* more than *Paganiſh*. They, unto whom now I ſpeak, know perfectly from Evidences of Fact in thoſe primitive Times, that new Revelation and Prophecy does not at all weaken and invalidate the Authority of the Scripture Text, as is moſt unworthily and baſely inſinuated; and that it cannot render void, the Need of a Clergy uninſpired, until the Effuſion of the Spirit ſhall be ſo abounding, as that all Men may be taught by it, from God immediately. But I do ſincerely and fervently pray, and hope, that they more eſpecially, may themſelves have the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation, for the better Knowledge of God and for the imparting the ſame, to the Comfort, Exhortation and Edifying, of the Body of Chriſt, the Church.

§ 22. Surely therefore, ſome will be prevailed on, by ſo many ſhining Examples of Faith in God revealing not

to be aſhamed of the Ways of the Spirit of God, which ignorant (and in the Goſpel ſenſe) unlearned Men, unlearned thro' the beggarly Elements of vain Philoſophy, have preſumed to deſpiſe: For thoſe that will imitate the primitive Worthies abovemention'd, ſet before us, do but follow them in the Steps of Faith, which the Scripture Prophets and Apoſtles walked before theſe in; and all the faithfull Seed of *Abraham*, in every Age have practiſed. It is then no Shame, to confeſs Chriſt before Men, according to the clear Lineaments of his Spirit, ſpeaking to the Prophets, by Angelick Apparition, Divine Dream, Heavenly Voice, Prophetick Viſion and Prophecy; which Communications from above, that we might more diſtinctly underſtand, I have endeavour'd in the firſt Part of this Treatiſe, to exemplify the divers Ways and Manners of the Oracles of God; not only from the Text, as it lies in the *Engliſh*, but from the emphatical Terms uſed by the Spirit inſpiring the Original. I have alſo, to the beſt of my weak Ability, for illuſtrating the Original Text, added an Explanation thereof, from the *Greek*, *Chaldee* and other moſt eſteem'd Tranſlations, of the *Polyglot* Bible. Moroover, upon every more material Caſe therein, I have exhibited the Opinions on the Text, of the moſt critically Learned, from the beſt Collection of them extant, *viz.* *Pools's Synopſis*; tho' all theſe may be far better clear'd by thoſe who are from their Youth train'd up therein.

§ 23. Upon theſe Foundations, it abundantly appears, that the Purport and Intent hereof is no other than a reducing all Things, touching the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints, to the Standard of Scripture Inſpiration, and the Teſtimonies concuring thereto of the primitive Ages of Chriſtianity. Wherefore this being the full and only Scope of the Firſt and Second Parts of this Tract, it follows, that all who love the Lord Jeſus, and the Truth as it is in Him, ſincerely; will or ought to beware, how they admit or purſue Principles, that are manifeſtly oppoſite to it, and derogating from the Prerogative of the great Prophet, Shepherd, Biſhop, and ſole Maſter of his Houſhold of Faith, the Church. But it may ſuffice, that in this Enquiry in to the Subject of the various Ways of the Spirit of Prophecy, we ſtand built upon the Principles of the *Proteſtant* Reformation, whilſt we provoke Men to the proving of all Things touching it, by the primary Inſtitutions, of our Faith in God revealing.

§ 24. In

§ 24. In the Close of the Second Part, we have taken Notice, how the Growth and Esteem of the Principles of the vainest Philosophy, even the *Epicurean*, (which turns into Ridicule, all preternatural Things) sowed the Field of the Church with the Tares of Infidelity, in Respect to the Ways of the prophetick Spirit; insomuch, that by the same Course of Argument, wherewith the wise Men among the *Greeks*, opposed and rejected the Gospel, or Message of God preached at the first; by the very same Courses, did the corrupt and apostatizing Christian, in the End of the Third Century, and afterwards, oppose and reject the prophetical Presence of Christ with his Church. Which will appear by comparing some Quotations of Philosophizing, mention'd in the Introduction, with those that are cited in the Close of the Second Part.

§ 25. The State of the Case then, of believing or disbelieving, any Revelation or Prophesying (since that which occurs in the Scripture, now allowed for Canonical) will turn upon the two differing Principles, of determining either by the Rules of natural Reason, or those of the Standard of previous Inspiration. For, in the Third Part, the Party in the Church, who condemn'd the *Montanists* or Inspir'd Preachers, do evidently appear, to have first advanced into the Discussion of Divine Things, the Precepts and Dictates of Philosophy; and then to have determined by them, touching the Ways of the Spitit of God, in his admonishing, instructing, guiding, reproving, exhorting and edifying of the Church. On the other Side, those that owned surviving Revelation and the Spirit of Christ, were determined in doing so, by the manifold Examples, Directions, Commands, Threatnings, and Promises, on that Subject, that are found in sacred Writ.

§ 26. But which of these two Principles, we are to make our Judge and Umpire in this Matter, can never rightfully come under Debate among *Protestants*, who in all other Things, submit themselves to the Scripture, as a compleatly sufficient Rule, to conclude upon. Wherefore, supposing it undebatable, that the same ought to be so in this also, and that when the Law and Testimony do decide in Favour of any Prophecy, the same should be admitted, as the Dictate of the Spirit of Christ; we have proposed the Subject of the Prophets called *Montanists*, to a new Consideration; wherein I doubt not, but they will be found, on an impartial and equitable Enquiry, to have been proceeded against, and condemned (from any Thing that appears

on good Authority) upon very little or no Reaſon, if the Scripture be allowed to circumſcribe and regulate that Reaſon.

§ 27. We cannot allow our ſelves to think, that any Chriſtians profeſſing the Reformation, can upon Deliberation, judge *Apollinaris* and the Clergy concurring with him, in a Sentence that is anti-ſcriptural, are fit Patterns for them to imitate and follow. Therefore, the hiſtorical Account in the Third Part, of the anti-prophetical Principles prevailing in the Chriſtian Church, is ſet before us for our Warning, as the Unbeleif of the *Iſraelites* is, (in the Third and Fourth Chapters to the *Hebrews*, and in 1 *Cor.* x. 1--12.) urged by the Apoſtle, for a cautionary Admonition to all Chriſtians, not to be guilty of the like. But being fully convinced that the Anti-prophetical Party in thoſe Ages, were Patrons of a looſe and depraved Diſcipline, Favourers of many corrupt Doctrines, and the firſt Introducers of all human Uſurpations, over the Church of Chriſt; their Judgment and Deciſions touching the prophetick Spirit, which oppoſed them in thoſe evil Courſes, deſerve to be examined anew, by all Perſons, who are willing ſincerely to appeal to, and leave themſelves fairly to be determin'd by the Divine Law and Teſtimonies only; as to others who chooſe to wink hard, and reſolve to ſhut their Eyes, and ſtop their Ears, we propoſe nothing to them.

§ 28. In the Second Part hereof, the very Reporters and Witneſſes we have of the *Cariſmata* or miraculous Gifts of the Spirit, in thoſe Three Centuries, do however take Notice, of many Deſpiſers of them: For Inſtance, *Ireneus* ſays, that ſome objected to, and were offended with, the phantaſtical Manner of the Prophets. *Tertullian* loudly complains, of Inſults offer'd to the Holy Ghoſt, in his Operations. After theſe, *Origen* delivers himſelf with Caution touching them, ſaying, *thoſe Perſons were Faithful that teſtifyed of ſuch Gifts*, intimating that they were ſubject to ſome inconveniences, by ſuch Confeſſion. *Cyprian* takes Notice, that ſome derided and ſcoffed at Viſion. *Dionyſius* of *Alexandria*, engaged againſt an upſtart Notion in his Time, that no Perſon ſhould ſpeak in the Church without Ordination and he ſays, that the Prophets hid themſelves, in his Age. Mr. *Dodwell* ſays, that in ſome Places the Prophets were ſo ill treated, that they were with Difficulty upon an emergent Occaſion brought into the Aſſemblies. Theſe Things therefore, with the Growth of *Epicurean* Philoſophy, that turned all preternatural Things into Ridicule, do

prove

prove from the Acknowledgers of Prophecy, that it was alſo by many deſpiſed and ſcoffed at with as little Senſe, as the Children uſed towards *Eliſha*, at the ſame Time, that it really exiſted.

§ 29. Now, if we conſider what is mention'd in the laſt Paragraph, and add unto it, the whole Torrent of Unrighteous Principles prevailing in the Third Part of this Treatiſe; and afterwards compute the further Corruption of the Chriſtian Church, when Chriſtianity, which before ſcarce included a Tenth Part of the *Roman* Empire, became the Religion of the State, and with the Multitudes brought over ſo, a Deluge of Ungodlineſs cover'd the World profeſſing it; it muſt be inconſiſtent with the Nature of Things, to expect after that falling away into Infidelity, ſuch Proof of Prophecy, as indiſpenſibly is to be drawn from ſome publick Acknowledgment thereof, whilſt at the ſame Time, the Scripture Definitions of it were denied and rejected. For if Men become in any Point of Fact whatſoever, either ſo ignorant, as to have no fixed or diſtinguiſhing Ideas touching it, or ſo willfully averſe to the knowing thereof that they will admit of no Criterions or Principles, upon which the ſame may be evinced; it can be no Wonder that thoſe who had no Ears to hear what the Spirit ſaid unto the Churches, ſhould aver he did not ſpeak; and that Men in ſuch Manner prejudiced, ſhould aſſert boldly, at any Time that there is no ſuch Thing exiſtent; but do therefore inſtead of it, fix a Character thereupon, ſuitable to their own Conceptions, and call it, Deluſion, Madneſs, Hereſy, Whimſey, and Fruits of the Panick.

§ 30. For Example; among the *Papiſts*, a Man ſhould labour in vain, to demonſtrate that we are *true Chriſtians*, according to the Tenour of God's Word; and why? Becauſe the *Catholick*, has previouſly to your Arguing, imbibed ſo many counter Definitions touching *true Chriſtianity*, that you muſt remain ſtill with him, under the Character of an *Heretick*. In like Manner, let us ſuppoſe, that the Spirit of Chriſt did ſignify the Will of God to any Man, in Dream, Viſion, or by the Apparition of an Angel, by heavenly Voice, or prophetick Inſpiration, warrantable in every Reſpect, by Preſidents and Definitions of Prophecy in Scripture: All this would be equally in vain, as in the other Caſe, when Chriſtians univerſally have taken up previous Principles, repugnant to the Tenour of God's Word, and have imbibed ſo many counter Definitions of Prophecy, that the ſame muſt alſo by them be eſteem'd, Enthuſiaſm,

Madneſs, Hereſy; as the *Jews* ſaid of *Jeremiah*, it was not God, and conſequently it was either natural Frenſy, Impoſture or the Devil in him, and no Matter to them which of theſe.

§ 31. Having therefore elſewhere given Reaſons to think, that the State of Fact in the Chriſtian Church was ſuch, at furtheſt in the Fifth Century; that by the Principles univerſally receiv'd, and the Conſtitution general of the Church, there could be no open Acknowledgment by her, of any Prophecy whatſoever, that was the true Dictate of the Spirit, any more than a deaf Man can report a Hearing, or a blind Man repreſent Colours; it remains, that there can be no Proof therefore now exhibited, how far the Longſuffering and Graciouſneſs of God endured, to wait on thoſe Ages, with the Admonitions of his immediate Vouchſafement, the prophetick Preſence of Chriſt with his Church. To ceaſe therefore any further Enquiry, into the State of Ages ſo far remote, all that has been already inſiſted on touching them, is but in order to the better Information of ours; that we may be inſtructed and warned, touching the important Duty, incumbent on us in the like Caſe, if it ſhould pleaſe the ſovereign Head of his Church, now, or at any Time, to demand an Allegiance on our Part by ſpeaking from Heaven to us, in any publick and (by the Scripture) authentick Way of ſignifying and revealing his Will immediate. For,

§ 32. Under the Fourth modern Doctrine, treated of in this Part, we have proved, that there is in the Old and New Teſtament both, ſeveral clear Promiſes on God's Part, to his Church on Earth, of reſtoring to her the Grace of the Spirit of Prophecy, in ſome Time yet to come. As therefore, for any Thing we can know, it may be in our Days; ſurely we are deeply concerned, not to ſuffer our ſelves to be prepoſſeſs'd with ſuch Principles touching it, as muſt unavoidably render us incapable, of obeying the Word of the Lord, or hearkening to any Voice from Heaven, and of Courſe muſt endanger us, to fall under that diſmal Crime, of imputing to the Devil, what really is a Teſtimony of Jeſus; for as to natural Madneſs, and Impoſture they ought always to be diſtinguiſhed, as doubtleſs upon Enquiry, it is no hard Matter. But as to Propheſying, or ſpeaking by a Spirit ſupernatural, Proteſtants who allow the written Word of God, to be a compleatly ſufficient Rule, in all other Points of Faith touching God, and his Ways, and Will, cannot judge the ſame to be deficient in this

this of knowing God from the Devil; or allow themſelves wittingly, in any Anti-ſcriptural Doctrines and Opinions, concerning the Point of Prophecy and immediate Revelation, without being inconſiſtent with themſelves, and acting againſt what they profeſs.

§ 33. Nevertheleſs, altho' there are ſeveral modern Doctrines herein cited, that are clearly unſcriptural, yet (as I have ſaid before) I am far from allowing my ſelf to think, that the Advancers of them, did it deſignedly. And indeed, the whole Subject of this Treatiſe, *viz.* The Manner and Evidences of Revelation to the Prophet, is generally ſpeaking, ſo much out of the Courſe of Divine's Study, that it is no Wonder, unwarrantable Poſitions ſhould heedleſly drop from them, as it were, in a ſurprize. We therefore, now appeal to their own more deliberate Thoughts and Reflection, ſetting aſide the Caſe of any particular Perſons, and pleading herein only upon general Rules, applicable to all Times and Inſtances, that can occur. Nevertheleſs, altho' in Charity we cannot ſuppoſe, any thing to be deſignedly taught, that is known by the Teachers, to be repugnant to the Word of God; yet as to the Fact, ſo it is, that all the World, even among us Proteſtants, are univerſally tinctured with Opinions precarious and unſcriptural, imbibed by Education, and ſtrengthen'd by Preſcription, which therefore Men are not afraid to judge and determine againſt the Spirit of the Lord by; ſo that whenever it ſhall be revived, as from Scripture 'tis apparent it muſt be, it muſt of Courſe alſo (whenever that is) be rejected, or the modern Syſtems be renounced.

§ 34. Wherefore, to the End, that in the Caſe of immediate Revelation and Propheey, the Spirit of Chriſt our Head and Lawgiver, according to the Tenour of Scripture Commands, Directions, Exhortations, Denuntiations and Promiſes, may be known, duly heeded and obeyed, whenever He ſhall ſpeak; I have in this Treatiſe, in Order to remove the Impediments which hinder, taken Notice of, and do hereby recommend and tender to a deliberate Conſideration, the Opinions anti-ſcriptural, more or leſs commonly owned and vented, as followeth.

1. *That Men may judge deciſively, of the ſupernatural Ways of God revealing, by the Light of their natural Reaſon.* Diſprov'd in the Introduction.

2. *Angels appearing are not to be believed or heeded.* Diſprov'd, Part i. Chap. 2.

3. *Angels in their Appearance uſing Familiarity, are evil Ones.* Diſprov'd there.

4. *Angels not viſible, without falling into a Trance.* Diſprov'd there.

5. *Angels always appear in the human Form.* Diſprov'd there, *and* Chap. 5. § 22.

6. *Angels never aſſume the Stile of the Deity.* Diſprov'd there.

7. *It is unworthy of God, to reveal Himſelf in a Dream.* Diſprov'd, Part i. Chap. 3.

8. *The being troubled in a Dream, is Proof of its not being a Divine one.* Diſprov'd there.

9. *Dreams, whoſe ſignification is not given at the Time, cannot be of God.* Diſprov'd there.

10. *Voices from God heard, muſt be without Terror.* Diſprov'd, Part i. Chap. 4.

11. *Darkneſs in the Senſe of a Voice heard, proves it not from God.* Diſprov'd there.

12. *Viſion, is no Divine Commiſſion to any Man.* Diſprov'd, Part i. Chap. 5.

13. *Viſions muſt be always luminous.* Diſprov'd there.

14. *Viſions are always ſeen in Trances.* Diſprov'd there.

15. *A Man muſt have the then Exerciſe of his Reaſon, when he ſees a Viſion.* Diſprov'd there.

16. *A wicked Man cannot have a Viſion from God.* Diſprov'd there.

17. *One Man cannot ſee a Viſion, when another preſent does not.* Diſprov'd there.

18. *The Viſion could not be from God, wherein the Seer receiv'd bodily Harm.* Diſprov'd there.

19. *A Viſion of Figures contemptible, is to be deſpiſed.* Diſprov'd there.

20. *Viſions muſt be clear in their Signification.* Diſprov'd there.

21. *A Prophet muſt be eſtabliſhed, by the Authority of the then Church.* Diſprov'd, Chap 6. § 2.

22. *A ſupernatural Smell or Taſte, is meer Whimſey.* Diſprov'd, § 1, 2, 3.

23. *The Word* Prophet *in Scripture ſignifies only a* Foreteller. Diſprov'd, § 7, 8, 9, 10.

24. *The Holy Spirit never deprived Men of their Senſes, or cauſed Extacies.* Diſprov'd *from* § 12. *to the* 20th.

25. *The Communications of the Holy Spirit never did Injury to the Body.* Diſprov'd § 17.

26. *The Spirit in the New Teſtament never ſhew'd it ſelf in Ways of Terror.* Diſprov'd, § 18, 22.

27. *Nothing unbecoming to a Grave and Sober Man, can come from the Spirit of God.* Diſprov'd *from* § 24. *to* 35.

28. *The Scripture Prophets had no Agitations of Body.* Diſprov'd *from* § 36 *to* 56.

29. *The Prophets of the New Teſtament were not agitated by the Spirit.* Diſprov'd, § 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 65.

30. *Divine Inſpiration is never by an Angel.* Diſprov'd *from* § 60, *to* 72.

31. *That the Words in Propheſying were never dictated by the Spirit, but the Senſe only.* Diſprov'd, § 74, *to* 78.

32. *Prophecy it ſelf in the Scripture, means no more than common Preaching.* Diſprov'd, Part i. Chap 6.

33. *The ordinary ſtated Miniſter is an Ambaſſador of Chriſt.* Diſprov'd, Part ii. Chap. 1.

34. *The Paracleet,* John xiv. 16. *ſignifies only a Comforter.* Diſprov'd, Part ii. Chap 2.

35. *The Canon of the New Teſtament Books, was cloſed in the firſt Century.* Diſprov'd, § 8, 9, 10.

36. *Miſtakes of the ſmalleſt Moment, are incompatible with the Spirit of Prophecy.* Diſprov'd, Chap. 4. § 5.

37. *The* Montaniſt *Prophets were Heretieks.* Diſprov'd *in* Part iii.

38. *The* Montaniſts *were acted by an evil Spirit.* Diſprov'd *in* Part. iii.

39. *The* Montaniſts *were Sciſmaticks.* Diſprov'd *in* Part iii.

40. *That cannot be the Spirit of Prophecy, which is not owned by the then Church.* Diſprov'd, Part iii. Chap. 2.

41. *The Spirit not communicated from the Clergy, cannot be true.* Diſprov'd, Chap 2. Article 2.

42. *The Scripture Prophets did not ſpeak in a Trance.* Diſprov'd, Chap 2. Article 10.

43. *The good Spirit does not at any Time ſuppreſs in propheſying, the uſe of the Underſtanding.* Diſprov'd, Article 11.

44. *It never could be the true Spirit of Prophecy, which predicted what did not come to paſs.* Diſprov'd, Part ii. Chap. 2. Art. 12.

45. *It cannot be a Divine Spirit, which in Laymen preſcribes, any Order or Diſcipline in the Church.* Diſprov'd Art. 13.

46. *There is to be no more any New Revelations of the Spirit.* Diſprov'd, Part iv. Doctrine 1.

47. *There was no Inſpiration in the Chriſtian Church after the Apoſtles.* Diſprov'd, Part ii.

48. *Whoever has a New Revelation, ſuperſeeds the Scripture thereby.* Diſprov'd, Part iv. Doct. 3.

49. *There is no Promiſe in the New Teſtament of prophetick Inſpiration.* Diſprov'd *in* Doct. 4.

50 *There is no need of Prophets.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 5.

51. *God will not ſend Prophets, becauſe it would be in vain.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 6.

52. *No Woman can be prophetically inſpir'd under the Goſpel,* Diſprov'd, Doct. 7.

53. *No Children were ever prophetically inſpir'd.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 8.

54. *It is not conſiſtent with the Divine Spirit to inveigh againſt the Clergy.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 9.

55. *A good Angel cannot uſe Words out of an Heathen Poet.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 10.

56. *Improprieties in Language are inconſiſtent with the Divine Spirit.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 11.

57. *The Holy Spirit never ſpake in a Language, unintelligible to the Hearers.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 12.

58. *The Prophets always did work Signs and Wonders.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 13.

59. *A ſingle Teſtimony of Revelation is not to be believed.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 14.

60. *Prophecy muſt have* ſomething *ſo peculiar, that nothing human or diabolical could do the like.* Diſprov'd *in* Doct. 14. 13. 15.

61. *Such Miracles only, as* Moſes, *our Lord and his Apoſtles wrought, are ſufficient to prove Inſpiration.* Diſprov'd *in* Doct. 15.

62. *Prophets without eminent Sanctification in Life, are to be rejected.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 16.

63. *Actions that are reſembling one poſſeſſed by the Devil, cannot come from the Spirit of God.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 17. *and* Part i. Chap. 6.

64. *Prophets muſt be ſubject to human Order and Regularity.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 18.

65. *Viſions of difficult Explication, are to be rejected.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 19.

66. *Threatning of Judgment upon Oppoſers cannot be of God.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 20.

67. *The Scripture was compoſed in Part by human Study.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 21.

68. *Propheſying is a Tyranny over Mens Underſtandings.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 22.

69. *Uſing*

69. *Uſing of the written Word does not conſiſt with immediate Inſpiration.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 23.

70. *The Knowledge of Mens Thoughts does not prove Inſpiration.* Diſprov'd, Doct. 24.

35. Among theſe Opinions, there are about half-a-dozen, that concern Matter in Fact, which is clearly diſprov'd, from the moſt authentick Records of the Chriſtian Church in the primitive Ages. The reſt are all of them, Poſitions or Principles, as thoſe called by the *Jews*, *The Traditions of the Elders*, directly oppoſite to thoſe, which the written Word of God, does by its Authority command us to obſerve and keep. Therefore, having a fixed Heart upon the Prerogative of the Great Shepherd and Biſhop of our Souls, we are no longer at Liberty, to liſten to any Teachers, in that wherein they do manifeſtly contradict and oppoſe the Dictates of his Spirit Prophetical in the Text. And to confeſs his Name and Power before Men, in any Point, wherein the Honour of Chriſt has been wounded and degraded, we eſteem our bounden Duty, in Return of that Self-Denial and Love of our *Emanuel*, that paſſeth all Expreſſion and Acknowledgment, on our Part poſſible. And tho' it appears too plainly, by what has been already ſaid, That many of our Divines do teach Doctrines or Principles of a very near Affinity with thoſe, whereon the Infidels in all Revelation do juſtify themſelves; yet it is with ſome Conſolation to find, that our *Engliſh* Doctors in Divinity have none of them (that we know of) proceeded to deny the Inſpiration of great Part of the Scriptures, as *the Five Letters concerning Inſpiration*, extracted from a Book entitled, *The Reflections of ſome Divines in* Holland, has notoriouſly done; and chiefly upon the ſilly Principle, that Matters Hiſtorical, and good Moralities generally owned, might be as well ſpoken and written of, without Inſpiration, which is what the Atheiſts alſo ſay. We have hinted elſewhere, that there are undeniably in the Scriptures, ſome *ſeeming Contradictions*, and Paſſages ſo difficult as are hard to be underſtood; ſo that tho' the Learned have been able to ſolve them (as *J. Gronovius* by a large Volume, has done that concerning the Death of *Judas*, mention'd in *Mat.* xxvii. and *Acts* i.) yet ſeeing that all Scripture divinely Inſpir'd, is written for our Inſtruction and Reproof; thoſe ſeeming Contradictions and Difficulties in the Text, do ſufficiently inſtruct us, not raſhly to condemn an Inſpiration, for the like Occurrences, any more than for ſpeaking ſuch Moralities or other Things,

that

that might be ſpoken without, and are for the Reproof of thoſe, who will preſumptuouſly do ſo. But if theſe greater Offences to human Reaſon, ought by no Means to be allow'd a Warrant ſufficient to reject an Inſpiration as this Author pretends; much leſs ought the leſſer Stumbling-blocks in *Method and Phraſe*, to be accounted ſo. Now, upon this Head, we are not to regard Characters ſo far, as to think we may ſafely err with the Learned *Eraſmus*, *Grotius* and others, who upon this latter Kind of Offence, do preſume often to tell us, ſuch and ſuch Paſſages were not Inſpir'd. Nor can we bear to have our Eyes hoodwink'd with the Piety of Mr. *Richard Baxter*, where he ſays in *the Saints Everlaſting Reſt*, p. 24, 32, 33, 34, 35. *Some believe the whole writing of the Scriptures to be of Divine Inſpiration, where it handleth the Subſtance, but doubt whether God infallibly guided them, in every Circumſtance. The Circumſtantials are many of them Divine, yet ſo as they have in them ſomething human. Much more is there ſomething human in the Method and Phraſe. Yet is there nothing ſinfully human, and therefore nothing falſe in all. But the innocent Imperfection here, is in the Method and Phraſe, which if we deny, we muſt renounce moſt of our* Logick *and* Rhetorick. Now, for the renouncing of *Logick* and *Rhetorick*, if there be much Difficulty, we ſay, that human Learning in its proper Place may be as fair as *Diana*; but thoſe who are ſo fond of it, as for the Sake thereof, to be offended with, to undervalue or turn their Back upon Revelation, we are to pity them as much, as that lovely young Gentleman in the Goſpel, who for a little of this Dunghil Earth, renounced the Treaſures in Heaven tendred him. But to proceed with our Recital,

§ 36. In what Senſe it could be, that the *Sadducees* ſaid *Acts* xxiii. 8, 9. *There was neither Angel nor Spirit*, is not eaſie to reſolve, ſeeing that they were Prieſts, and owned the Books of *Moſes*, wherein we find ſo frequent mention of Angels, converſant with Men. But by thoſe Circumſtances, we may juſtly fear, that among Chriſtians of the modern rate, there are many that draw nearer than they, to ſimple and total Disbelief of Spirits or Angels; and they being a Sect not popular, the Error ſeems much more epidemical among Chriſtians; and as to the Confeſſion of the *Phariſees*, that an Angel might have ſpoken to St. *Paul*, and if it were ſo, that the oppoſing of him in that Caſe, would be no leſs than (by the *Greek*) *a fighting with bended Fiſts againſt God*, I meet with few now-adays, that will argue ſo fairly. But as there are in the Catalogue of theſe anti-prophe-

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tical Doctrines, many that evidently tend, to propagate and ſupport *Sadduciſm* in the worſt Senſe, and a Contempt of reveal'd Religion in general; all Men that Deſire and ſeek the Welfare of it, are herein called upon to remember that Chriſt has no Communion with *Belial*, nor true Chriſtians with Infidels; for whilſt we are not without Law unto God, but under the Law to Chriſt, even the Law of Faith preſcribed in Holy Writ, we ought to be ſeparated from ſuch Principles of the Men of *Belial*, whoſe Luſt and private Will, or Reaſon, or Intereſt, is their ſole Law; by which even the Scripture Revelation is overturn'd and ſuperſeded, and made a Subject of the Scoff.

§ 37. Inſtead therefore of ſuperſedeing the Scripture, which the owning of any Revelation, ſince the Death of St. *John*, is charged withal; we find, that the Supporters of That Charge, by deminiſhing from it, in adding their own Inventions for a Standard, do make themſelves in great Meaſure Partakers of that Guilt, wrongfully imputed to others; and the Perſons who on the contrary are ready to ſubmit to the Authority of the Holy Spirit, that was at the firſt poured out, in dreaming Dreams, ſeeing Viſions, and Propheſying when the Holy Ghoſt filled them, and gave the Utterance; they, even they only, do fully own and honour, the precedent Prophecy of Scripture, written for our Learning and Imitation, and for the Foundation of Faith and Hope; and thereby do adhere to the Simplicity of the Truth, as it is in Jeſus.

§ 38. As to the Danger of *Enthuſiaſm*, ſo often inſiſted on, we conceive, there can be none that bears any Compariſon with the Evil of profane Scorning, whilſt the Scripture is to decide, what is true, and what is falſe of that kind; but if Men indeed are arbitrarily to preſcribe Rules, of deciding, touching it, there may be great Danger, of having all Things preternatural, become a Subject of Ridicule, and in Conſequence, that the Eſſence of true Religion ſhould fall to the Ground. The Queſtion lies, in the Definition of *Enthuſiaſm*, which Men, as Men are not to be entruſted with; for that were to ſubject the Infinite Creator, to a Judgment from his Creature: And as nothing can be more natural to Man, in his faln Eſtate, than to err in his Determination touching Supernatural Things, we ceaſe from Man, and ſubject our ſelves to the Father of Spirits, in all the Diſcoveries He has graciouſly given us, to know Him by.

§ 39. Thoſe

§ 39. Thoſe that are true Enthuſiaſts, that is, ſuch as are acted by a divine Spirit, according to the Laws of Chriſt and his Spirit in the Apoſtles, do acknowledge the ſtated Miniſtry, ſo far as the Diſcharge and Exerciſe of their Office, is agreeable with the Scripture Inſtitution of it. But whoever of the Clergy, ſhall oppoſe the Word of God, inſtead of teaching it, and ſhall in the Points treated of herein, teach otherwiſe, and lead Men away from the Divine Statutes, and Teſtimonies of Himſelf, they ought to be ſo far, as much rejected, as thoſe of the Church of *Rome*; becauſe it is unintelligible, how Chriſt can be with the former, any more than with the latter, againſt Himſelf and the Dictates of his Spirit in the Text. The ever memorable Mr. *John Hales* of *Eaton* College, in his Tract on the Lord's-Supper, tells us, " That all that the Church now " can pretend to, of the Spirit, is nothing but the Reaſon " illuminated by Revelation out of the written Word; " which written Word is metonynically call'd the Spirit, " becauſe the Holy Ghoſt ſpake thoſe Things by the Mouths " of the Prophets, Apoſtles, and Evangeliſts, when they " liv'd, and now ſpeaks unto us by their Pens when they " are dead. As to the Queſtion, *Whether the Church may " err in Fundamentals?* Concerning this Merriment newly " ſtarted, I mean, the requiring a Catalogue of *Fundamentals*, " I need to anſwer no more, but what *Abraham* tells the " rich Man in Hell, they have *Moſes* and the Prophets, " the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, let them ſeek them there; " for if they find them not there, in vain ſhall they ſeek " them in all the World beſides. By the *Church*, without " trifling, I ſhall underſtand, all Factions in Chriſtianity " either *Roman* or *Proteſtant*, even all that entitle themſelves " to Chriſt, whereſoever diſpers'd all the World over. And " thus, I anſwer, that every Chriſtian may err that will; " for if Men might not err wilfully, then there could be " no Hereſy, Hereſy being nothing elſe but wilful Error; " for, if we account Miſtakes befalling us through human " Frailties, to be Hereſies, then it will follow that eve- " ry Man, the Apoſtles (*perhaps*) only excepted, was an " Heretick, for never was there any Chriſtian, who did " not in ſomething concerning the Chriſtian Faith miſtake " himſelf. And ſince it is confeſs'd, That all ſingle Per- " ſons not only may, but do err; it will prove a very hard " matter, to gather out of theſe, a multitude, of whom be- " ing gather'd together, we may be ſecur'd, that they can- " not err. This I muſt confeſs for my own part, ſeems

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" to me as merry a Speech, as if a Man ſhould ſay, That " every ſingle Soldier (in an Army) may indeed run away, " but a whole Army cannot. St. *Paul* Preaching to the *Gen-* " *tiles*, tells them, that God was with them in ſo palpable a " manner, that even by groping (as a blind Man) they might " have found Him; yet we know what the *Gentiles* did. " Thus Chriſt hath promis'd his perpetual Aſſiſtance to his " Church; but hath He left any Prophecy, that the Church " ſhould perpetually adhere to Him; if any Man think He " hath, it is his part to inform us, where this Prophecy is " to be found." Every Man that will, may find Prophecies in the New Teſtament, of the revolt of the Church or her Apoſtacy from Chriſt; and upon what is here ſaid, a wiſe and conſiderate Man ought never to be more jealous of his erring, than when he conceits his Opinion to be true, becauſe it is univerſal.

§ 40. The chiefeſt Apoſtles had no Authority againſt the Truth, but for the Truth only; and if it were poſſible, that an Heavenly Angel could teach counter to it, we are bound to reject him; therefore, there can be no culpable Diſreſpect to any Man, if upon the ſame Foundation, we renounce any Preſcriptions or Precepts taught us by ſuch an One, how we are to fear and reverence God, when they appear diſſonant from thoſe of the Sacred Oracle. For, if Prophets are to be try'd and judged by the Word of Truth preceding, ſo likewiſe are others who would decide touching them, and by the Apoſtle's Injunction, to be accounted of as accurſed. Wherefore let God be true in his Word, and every Man, without Partiality and Diſtinction, either of Prophet or common Teacher, be accounted a Liar, who oppoſes it. Nevertheleſs, there ought to be a regard in ſpecial had, to the Circumſtance of One, who ſtands before the Lord in a Prophetick Commiſſion, *as the Eye of an Handmaid looketh to the Hand of her Miſtreſs*: For as God is a Sovereign Abſolute, not concluding Himſelf by the general Laws obligatory on his own Creatures; ſo we have ſhewn, in *Part* I. *Chap.* vi. § 29, 30. the Prophet may ſometimes be in Duty obliged to do a Thing by an immediate Command, which it were not lawful, but an heavy Guilt for any other Man to do; and yet he ſtands not in this, an Oppoſer of the general Law of God, as another Man would be. Thus to what we have ſaid there, it deſerves to be conſider'd, that in *Matth.* xii. 1---4. when the *Phariſees* charg'd the Diſciples with doing, what was *not lawful to do on the Sabbath Day*; our Saviour makes a Defence for

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the unlawful eating of his Diſciples, by *David*'s eating the Shew-bread, which was *not lawful for him to eat.* "The force " of which Defence, ſays the ever memorable Mr. *Hales*, " on the Place, lay in this; among the *Jews*, the Law " of the Sabbath was ever ſo to be interpreted, as that it " hinder'd not the (laborious) Works of the Temple, and " therefore it was a kind of Rule in the *Jewiſh* Law, That " in the Temple there was no Sabbath. Now, from this " ſubmiſſion of the Law of the Sabbath, to the Works of " the *Temple-ſervice*, our Saviour argueth here to that " which is greater *than it*, to wit, the Works of a Pro- " phet, who was above a Prieſt. So that, his Anſwer in " brief is this; The Prieſts by their Works in the Tem- " ple upon the Sabbath, were not thought to profane the " Sabbath, and therefore there is leſs reaſon, that my Diſ- " ciples, who are Prophets, ſhould be thought to profane " it, in doing of that which is leſs Work than theirs. For, " the truth is, every Prophet was greater than the Temple; " that is, he was oblig'd in no Caſe, to the Laws and " Cuſtoms of the Temple; but might ſacrifice out of it, " when he pleas'd, as appears in the Practice of *Elijah*." But to reſume the Diſcuſſion of the general Way, by which Things are to be try'd.

§ 41. I make no doubt, but all good Chriſtians are agreed, to have the Law and Teſtimony a Standard of Trial; and the ſole Intent of this Treatiſe, is to propoſe a Subject of that Trial, which has not poſſibly been hitherto, ſo largely ſtated: But certainly, there is a great deal of Partiality uſed, touching the Point of Inſpiration, ſuch as is not to be met with among *Proteſtant* Divines upon any other Head: For *Firſt*, whilſt they allow it to be a Caſe, that comes under the general Rule of trying the Spirits, and proving Things, before they are judged upon; they tell us, that there is no Promiſe in the New Teſtament of any Inſpiration at all, but of evil Spirits; thence they proceed upon their own Authority to affirm, That there never has been any ſince the Apoſtolick Age, and that poſitively there never will be any, unto the World's End; for every new Revelation entirely ſuperſedes the Scripture thereby. Now, we will appeal for once to common Senſe, whether after theſe Preliminaries, they are likely to weigh, try or prove any Thing equitably, when it is previouſly determined by them on one Side. Nay, we appeal to their own Conſciences, to give a Reaſon, wherefore they pretend to have examined the Merits of a Cauſe, and to have judged

judged upon it, when it appears from their own Confeſſion, that Sentence was paſſed before ſuch Examination.

§ 42. *Secondly*, The Partiality of thoſe who claim to be Judges of Inſpiration, appears fully from their own Confeſſion, that it is a Matter beyond their Conception, what outward or inward Impreſſion whatſoever, could ever aſſure a Prophet, that any Revelation was from God. Nay, ſay they, we know not what Motions or Force will clearly argue any ſupernatural Cauſe at all, yet God does ſubject his Revelation to our Trial, who has given us Faculties able to judge of it. The Faculties therefore herein mention'd, being by their own Confeſſion, able only to judge againſt Revelation, and utterly incapable to judge for it, they muſt needs be but an unequal Jury on the Caſe.

§ 43. *Thirdly*, Their Partiality in the Point is further declared by the poſitive Aſſertions, That there is no Need of Prophets, and for themſelves they are ſatisfied, that God will not ſend them, becauſe it would be in vain; for no body ought to believe any Revelation, the Truth of which in Fact reſts upon a ſingle Teſtimony. Now, the Nature of Revelation being ſuch, that it is moſt frequently given to a ſingle Perſon: And indeed, if we are to reject every ſingle Witneſs, there remains no Means of believing a Number, for even that will depend upon examining the Individuals. But thoſe who are before-hand ſatisfy'd, that God will not ſend them in any Number, more or leſs, becauſe there is no Need at all of them, and it would turn to no good Account, if they were truly Prophets; can it be poſſible that Men ſo prepoſſeſs'd, ſhould hear, try, or judge impartially?

§ 44. *Fourthly*, The Partiality of theſe Men in the Caſe appears further, by their aſſerting, That for an Inſpiration to be beleiv'd on its own Authority, is a Tyranny over the Underſtandings of Men; becauſe that, Granting, ſay they, it was really from God, it would be the ſame Raſhneſs to receive it, as to give Credit to an Impoſture (without an Atteſtation, beyond what moſt of the Scripture Prophets had, *Doct.* XIV. 15.) Wherefore, here is a Suppoſition, that there may be true Prophets, or Meſſengers commiſſion'd from above, and ſtill not to be believ'd or heeded: Now the Reaſoners in this Manner, may well be conceiv'd very backward to own, what they determine ought to be rejected, and therefore muſt be concluded for unfair Judges of it, while under Debate.

§ 45. *Fifthly*,

§ 45. *Fifthly*, The Partiality of the Clergy on this Head, appears further herein, by other *numerous Doctrines* advanced by them, touching Prophetick Inſpiration, which are manifeſtly againſt the Divine Teſtimonies of Scripture. For, tho' in Charity we do not believe, that theſe are wilfully urged by them, againſt their own Convictions, any more than thoſe of the *Jews* pleaded againſt our Saviour, were againſt theirs; yet the Readineſs wherewith they run more into Error, in this Point than others, does ſhew ſuch a Propenſity and Inclination of the Heart, to deceive themſelves, as does not leave them a Liberty, of weighing Things by the equitable Ballance of the Sanctuary, or by any Sort of Equality, ſuch as they require from the Scepticks; which Conſiration, makes a Judgment ſo pronounced, to become of no Value.

§ 46. Their *Partiality in the Law*, even that of the Righteouſneſs of God by Faith, does in the Caſe before us, betray it ſelf: By continually urging that Part of our Duty from it, that conſiſts in rejecting of ſuch Prophecy, as is not agreeable to the Law and Teſtimony, and to the Analogy of Faith; whilſt they are wholly and perpetually ſilent on that Part of God's Word, which obliges the Prophet himſelf to purſue his Commiſſion, and others to hear the Voice of the Lord by him, as we have briefly hinted in Part III. Chap. 3. Wherefore, when the Obligations to receive ſuch an one, are paſs'd over and conceal'd, and inſtead thereof we are taught, that we ought to give no more Credit to a Perſon truly inſpir'd, than to an Impoſtor, as above-mention'd; there is no Wonder, if among the People, a Zeal ſo little regulated by Knowledge, do proceed to treat Him with all the Ways of Iniquity, wherewith the *Jews* us'd to do.

§ 47. *Seventhly*, The Partiality of *Divines*, in the Cauſe of Inſpiration, appears by the ſeveral Hints they give of the great Dangers from it, tho' the ſame be limited to the Standard of Scripture, whilſt they expreſs little Apprehenſion comparatively of thoſe diſmal Principles warranting the Contempt of the Holy Prophetick Spirit, even ſuch whereon *Deiſm*, *Sadduciſm* and *Atheiſm* are built. Now, thus far cannot be deny'd to *Enthuſiaſm*, which exhibits as her Plea, a ſupernatural Influence, in Dreams, Viſions, Voices heard, and forceable Impreſſions internal and external; that by the very Act, of therein acknowledging the Agency of Spirits or Angels, every one that does witneſs his Experience in that kind, gives thereby a Teſtimony of the inviſible World; and thus far, his Confeſſion does concur with the

whole

whole Tenour of Scripture, and in doing ſo, far better anſwers the Purſuit of the Glory of God, than the Philoſophick Doctrines ſo often vented from the Pulpit, touching the ſecret Powers in Nature; for, touching theſe, ſay they, We have diſcover'd them to be ſo great, that we know not how far it is, that theſe may work miraculous Effects; nay, we know not ſo much, as what can prove clearly in Prophetick Influences, any ſupernatural Cauſe at all; and yet, by our further Enquiry into the Corpuſcular Philoſophy, we may advance conſiderably, in theſe uſeful Diſcoveries.

§ 48. *Eighthly*, In the various Kinds of Partiality above-mention'd, we ſtand limited to the Declarations of the modern Clergy touching themſelves, extracted from the Twentyfour Doctrinal Articles, cited from their Tracts and Sermons lately printed. We might here further add a great Number of other Prejudices, they unhappily lie under, which muſt of Neceſſity, make it even more difficult for them than other Men, ever to know the Voice of the Great Shepherd, ſpeaking to them by that Spirit, which teſtifies of Him. But as the Twentyfour Articles herein built upon, are given as a Specimen only of what might be of the ſame kind, more largely drawn from their Writings, we ſhall not here, in ſetting forth their Partiality, look further than them, for Occaſions to demonſtrate it, leſt we ſhould ſeem to ſeek purpoſely to expatiate on their Irregularities: But even thus, the Scholaſtick Way of their Education and Study, which obliges them ſtrictly to adhere to the Rules of Grammar, is found to make them to determine raſhly and wrongfully of the Spirit of Prophecy, by the ſame Rules, notwithſtanding the Scripture Inſtances of the contrary, as appears by the Eighth Article. Thus alſo, the Diſpoſition and Habit of magnifying the Advantages and Honour of their own Function in the Church, leads them inſenſibly into wrong Meaſures of judging upon That of the Prophet, as in the Ninth, Eighteenth, Fifth, Sixteenth, and Twentyfirſt Doctrines, appears abundantly.

§ 49. After the Mention of theſe ſeveral Ways, whereby the Clergy being partial in themſelves, do become evil Judges upon the Point of Prophetick Inſpiration; let us add to them, what is obſerv'd in the *Introduction*, *viz.* "That "the Underſtanding of Man in general, is not ſincerely "diſpoſed to receive the Light of Truth; but receives an "Infuſion, as it were, of adventitious Colours, from the

" Will and Affections, which makes him ſooner believe " thoſe Things, that he is deſirous ſhould be true, and re- " ject many others upon ſuch Accounts, that do no ways " inſer their being falſe: Wherefore, there are in Men, " ſome ſecret Propenſities to err about Divine Things, and " Indiſpoſitions to admit Truths, which not only detect the " Weakneſſes of our Nature and perſonal Diſabilities, and " thereby offend and mortify our Pride and our Ambition; " but ſtrongly tend to diſcover to our ſelves and others, " our Vices and Faults, and oftentimes to croſs our Deſigns " and Intereſts. Upon which Accounts, and that of innate " Pride, almoſt every Man in particular, makes the Noti- " ons he has entertain'd already, and his Senſes, his Incli- " nations and his Intereſts, the Standards by which he eſti- " mates and judges all other Things, whether natural or " reveal'd."

§ 50. If then, the Clergy are Partakers of the Infirmities, and moral Depravities of our common Nature, and therefore are equally tinctured with our intellectual Weakneſſes, Prejudices, Prepoſſeſſion by Cuſtom and Education, and are ſwayed as well as others, by Intereſt and Paſſions; there can be little Wonder, that in the Caſe of Prophecy exiſting, which is the tendereſt Point wherein they can be touched and tried, they ſhould always have diſcover'd a Propenſity to err, and be guilty of partial and unequal Judgment. For, as they of all other Men, are leaſt diſpoſed and likely upon general Conſiderations, to admit Truth in this Point, ſo they are yet the more unhappy with reſpect to it; becauſe that among all the Particulars of Truth, which can be inſtanced; a Revelation from God does often require to be examin'd into, with the moſt diſintereſted, diſpaſſionate, and unbyaſs'd Temper of Mind. Upon which Account it is, that whenever God ſpeaks, we find every where in Divine Writ, we are call'd upon, to become as little Children, and to unlearn all our Prepoſſeſſions, Paſſions and Intereſts, that we may admit it.

§ 51. Upon the whole therefore, conſidering that, Inſpiration Prophetick does in it ſelf neceſſarily tend to leſſen the Eſteem, which otherwiſe does divolve upon the ſtated Miniſter, in the Church, even as it ſets up another Sort of Preachers, ſuch as the Old and New Teſtament do warrant, and conſtitute of a higher Form. Let us ceaſe from Aſtoniſhment, that the Prieſts under the Law, ſhould ſo conſtantly oppoſe the Word of the Lord, by the Prophets, and the People appear leſs prejudiced againſt them, as is ſignally

ſignally remarkable in *Jeremiah*'s Caſe, *Chap.* xxvi. 8—17. Neither is it more ſtrange, that the Chriſtian Clergy in the primitive Ages, ſhould deal ſo unequally with the Inſpir'd Miniſters or Prophets, as is mention'd at large, in the Third Part of this Treatiſe; for, by an Enquiry into the Modern Doctrines, touching Prophecy, or Revelation, we find Evidence apparent and uncontrollable, that the Divines do therein diſcover ſuch Partialities in Judgment concerning it, as do clearly ſhew, that they are almoſt incapable in their preſent Eſtate, of receiving whatever is at any Time, true in that kind.

§ 52. If the Divine Council had thought fit, in the Diſpoſal of his extraordinary Gifts, always to beſtow them upon ſuch, who were veſted in the Office of ordinary Miniſters, that one and the ſame Sort of Men, had enjoyed both Characters; 'tis very probable, that the Clergy might always have inculcated the Reverence due to God revealing, at any Time preſent, thro' Ages ſucceſſively, as well as in the Subject of his Revelation, in Times long paſs'd. But ſeeing, that in the Old Teſtament it appears to have been much otherwiſe, and in the New, the very conferring of thoſe Gifts, even to Women, did authorize publickly to preach; they may, if they judge it fit, be diligent in purſuing the Meaſures of the Shepherds predicted, *Ezek.* xxxiv. againſt the poor *Enthuſiaſts*. I am Advocate for none, but who wiſh to ſee the Gift of Prophecy among the Clergy themſelves, and ſhould rejoice in it, above all Things poſſible, on this Side Heaven.

§ 53. In the mean Time, whilſt the Miniſters generally, ſhall continue, from their rooted Prepoſſeſſions, unſcriptural Doctrines, and partial Inclinations, to do Deſpite to the Spirit of Grace, even the Grace and Favour of God to his Church, the Prophetick Spirit; all true Propheſying, the Teſtimony of Jeſus, muſt in conſequence be under the utmoſt Circumſtance of Contempt, with the religious Part of Mankind, or at leaſt the Body of them, who implicitly and blindly follow their Miniſters, and are either little at Leiſure, or diſpoſed to examine, and judge for themſelves; becauſe alſo the profane and vitious, are little thoughtful of a God, and upon that Account they muſt of Courſe, hate and dread all Agency of Spirits, the Powers of the World to come; for it is their Inclination and Intereſt, to magnify the Power of Nature, and to render the evidence of Supernatural Things trifling and deſpicable. Thus it comes

comes to paſs, that the whole Lump of Mankind, muſt be conjointly prone to reject Prophecy.

§ 54. Upon this Foot, it is granted, that the Preachers up of Infidelity in God revealing, in our degenerate Ages, are ſure to be juſtified before Men, in their ſpeaking evil of, or calumniating the Holy Spirit, and to be applauded in their fine Philoſophick Declamations againſt the Prophetical Madman, the Fool for Chriſt's Sake? Well! And what of all this? Why, the Sum and Upſhot of all is, that at any Time and Occaſion the Prophet has a Sentence paſſed upon him, by the Concurrence of all Mankind, that he is out of his Wits, he is an Impoſtor, he is a Blaſphemer, he is ~~never~~ what not? But upon what Law has this Sentence been paſs'd? *Upon the Dogmaes and Preſcripts of Philoſophy, the* Epicurean *and* Corpuſcular. What ſaid the Scripture in the Caſe? *That was found partial, for the* Enthuſiaſt, *the* Viſionair, *the* Heretick, *the Diſturber of Mankind with vain Fancies, and therefore there was little Uſe made of it in the Trial, but in ſome Points it was over-ruled.* Who were the Judges that paſs'd the Sentence on the Criminal? *The Clergy of the* Fifth, *the* Sixth, *the* Seventh, *the* Eighth, *the* Ninth, *the* Tenth, *the* Eleventh, *the* Twelfth, *the* Thirteenth, *the* Fourteenth, *the* Fifteenth, *the* Sixteenth, *the* Seventeenth *Centuries.* But what ſaid the Condemn'd in his own Defence? *He denied the Authority of the Law, he was try'd upon,* (*viz.* Philoſophy) *and charging the Judges with Corruption in his Caſe, he pleaded manifold Statutes in the Word of God, for his Defence in both. He appeal'd moreover, to the moſt antient Commentaries on thoſe Statutes, and to a great Number of Preſidents, in the purer Ages of Chriſtianity.* The Facts upon Examination, will ſpeak themſelves.

§ 55. We find the *Jews* upbraiding to the Followers of Jeſus, that they obſerved and walked not according to the Tradition of the Elders; to which our Lord anſwer'd, That they, the *Jews* had made void the Law by their Traditions; and therefore his Diſciples ought not to keep to them. Again, St. *Paul* tells us, he once thought himſelf bound in Conſcience, to do many Things againſt the Name of Jeſus, ſo that being moſt exceedingly zealous of the Traditions of the Fathers, *Gal.* i. 14. he was in courſe exceedingly mad againſt all Believers, compelling them by Perſecution to blaſpheme. Now theſe are Admonitions ſufficient to us, not to rely upon any Sort of Concluſions againſt the Authority of God revealing, whatever Univerſality or long

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Preſcription there may be in the Church, from the Fathers and Elders of it; that are found upon Examination, deſtructive of the Obligation and Duty incumbent on us, from the poſitive Laws of God. Wherefore, it being manifeſt from Scripture, that there is no Duty more frequently inculcated, nor enforced with ſeverer Denunciations upon the Contumacious, than what concerns the hearing or rejecting the Voice of the Lord; as I have proved in the Third Chapter of the Third Part, and alſo the Third of this; and in the whole Argument, we ſee plainly, that the Oppoſers calling it culpably Enthuſiaſm, and Hereſy, (even as the *Jews* treated Chriſtianity it ſelf) they founded themſelves therein upon human Philoſophy, which in Scripture is called a falſe Science in Reference to ſacred Things, and is no more than the Imagination of Men, *Jer.* ix. 14. and the ſetting up in their Hearts thoſe Imaginations, is the ſetting up Idols, *Ezek.* xiv. 7. and the preaching of ſuch Precepts is in *Matthew* and *Iſaiah*, called the teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.

§ 56. Seeing then that our Faith muſt not ſtand upon the Wiſdom of Men, and we are warned by the Holy Ghoſt againſt it, 1 *Cor.* the Firſt and Second Chapters, and that we ſhould not ſubject our ſelves to their Ordinances or Appointments of that Kind, but beware of the Leaven of the *Phariſees*, and of thoſe that corrupt or deal deceitfully with the Word of God, in building Hay and Stubble upon the true Foundation. We will ſuppoſe, that Our Jeſus ſhould ſend his Angel to teſtify Things to the Churches, or, that Angel ſhould come who is to preach to every Nation, *Rev.* xiv. 6. It is granted by St. *Paul*, that an Angel from Heaven (whether by Inſpiration, Viſion, or Voice, is not material) may teach us a Goſpel, or Meſſage from God, tho' not diſſonant from what we have receiv'd; in which Caſe, it remains that we be prepared, diſpoſed, and in a State of Capacity to judge equitably, every Man for himſelf: For, *private Judgment in Matters of Religion, was the very Root of the Whole Reformation* (as the *Paſtoral* of the Biſhop of *Sarum*, in the Preface to its Third Edition; and other Authors without Number, do acknowledge) *which could never have been compaſſed, if private Men have not a right to judge for themſelves; on the contrary, every Man is bound to judge for himſelf, which indeed he ought to do in the Fear of God.* Now this is provable from the whole Tenour of the Scriptures, and we have the more Reaſon to give Heed to this Admonition, becauſe we are told by the Late Biſhop of

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Bath and *Wells*, in his Demonſtration of the *Meſſias*, Part ii. p. 64. that one of the Cauſes of the *Jews* rejecting Our Jeſus, was, *a Belief that they were oblig'd to give a blind and implicit Belief to their Superiors, without uſing their Judgment of Diſcretion, and examining the Meriss of the Cauſe. For, wherever this* LEWD *Opinion obtains, the Way of coming at the Truth is obſtructed; and this is the Miſery of it, that if a Man chance to be miſled by his Superiors, there will be no Hope he ſhould ever return to the Truth: Becauſe, he that thinks himſelf obliged to believe, as his Superiors believe, whenever he is miſguided, he is paſt all Hope of ever returning into the right Way again. And tho' this Devotedneſs to their Wiſe-men (or Doctors) was in ſome Caſes warranted by* Deut. xvii. 8--13. *yet in Reſpect to our Saviour, the Queſtion was touching Matters of Faith, wherein every Man is to account for himſelf. Jeſus tells us, that if the Blind lead the Blind, they ſhall both fall into the Ditch: The* Jews *on the other Hand, erroniouſly thought themſelves bound to believe with their Elders, and one* GREAT *Reaſon why they rejected Jeſus and his Doctrine, was That Error; for ſay they, have any of the Rulers, or the Phariſees believ'd on him?* If then, according to theſe Admonitions, and the numerous plain Texts of the Goſpel, every Man is bound to judge for himſelf, in Things relating unto God in every Point; ſurely, in the Subject of immediate Revelation, there is much more Reaſon, and even a Neceſſity to do ſo, when the Clergy or Teachers of every Sect, appear ſo openly to have departed from the general Rules of Scripture; and to have even in their very preſent Conſtitution and Character, ſo violent Partialities and Prejudices, as I have but juſt now mention'd. Beſides all which, I wiſh that the Clergy of every Sort, as to the Point here before us, might deſerve leſs of what the ſame Biſhop of *Sarum* there ſays as above; *that the much greater Part of thoſe who come to be ordain'd* (or are receiv'd into the Number of Teachers) *are ignorant to a Degree, not to be apprehended by thoſe, who are not oblig'd to know it. For the eaſieſt Part of Knowledge is that, to which they are the greateſt Strangers, I mean, the plaineſt Parts of the Scripture; ſo that thoſe who ought to be of Ability to teach others, do themſelves need that one teach them, the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God.* For, in ſuch an Eſtate, Error and a falſe Judgment is unavoidable, by our Saviour's Rule, *Mark* xii. 24. *Do ye not therefore err, becauſe ye know not the Scriptures?*

§ 57. When Prophets ſhall ariſe, having upon them outward Evidences of a Spirit ſupernaturally moving them, wherein

wherein we take it from the Scripture, the moſt general Definition of a Prophet did conſiſt; the Rules mention'd in the Head of this Chapter, preſcribed to the *Sceptick* and *Deiſt*, to make him capable of receiving Revelation, ſhould be alſo obſerved, with Reſpect to the ſame Subject at all Times. And if thoſe Five Prelimenaries, by Dr. *Goodman*, be requiſite to every ſober Enquirer into the Caſe of Revelation; there can be no juſt Cauſe to eſteem any Concluſion, which Men have made without them, in their pretended Examination, Trial, and Deciſion touching Spirits, to have duly paſſed at any Time, againſt the condemn'd Enthuſiaſt. But if the Enquirers into the Argument of this preſent Treatiſe, will be pleaſed to uſe the ſame Equity and Temper of Sobriety, towards the Prophets, which the Clergy do demand from the Sceptical *Deiſt*; we have nothing more to requeſt of them, than to ſet aſide falſe Rules of trying, and to allow the Tenour of Scripture, for the only Standard and compleatly ſufficient in the Caſe to determine the Quality of that Spirit, by which Men propheſy, whether it be the Good or Evil one. Let this be the Touchſtone, and concluſive equally on either Side, and let him that does not ſubmit to it, either the Prophet or his Cenſurer, be *Anathema Maranatha*.

§ 58. And as the Scripture is certainly competent, to give the Diſtinction of the Quality of that Spirit which actuates and moves to Utterance; and to diſtinguiſh between God and the Devil; ſo there is no Doubt, but the ſame is alſo ſufficient to furniſh to us Circumſtances, whether in Viſion or Propheſying, that with Chriſtians ought to be receiv'd, as Moral Evidences diſtinguiſhing enough between a natural and ſupernatural Agency; for in 2 *Pet.* i. 21. the Apoſtle ſuppoſes, that the being agitated, or violently moved by the Spirit, is Proof that Prophecy ſo brought and utter'd, does not come by the Will of the Man, then ſpeaking. Wherefore, ſurely our furious Zeal againſt *Enthuſiaſm*, is no Warrant to give Scope to the Devil, to introduce *Sadduciſm*, which makes the Darkneſs of this World compleat, for him to rule and domineer by the Baits of Pleaſure, Profit and Honour uncontrolled. But leaving theſe Matters to further and heedful Conſideration upon all that has been ſaid in this Treatiſe; in Reference to Impoſture, and the Signs of a crazed Brain, every particular Inſtance ought to ſtand upon its own Foot; and if any further Rules whatſoever can be laid down by the Opponents of *Enthuſiaſm*, which do not make void the Law of God in this Point, they will

will be readily at all Times allowed and embraced, by the conſcientious Worſhipper of God, in Spirit and Truth.

§ 59. But whether Men will act like *Gallio*, in caring for none of theſe kind of Things, or whether they are inclined to ſearch the Scriptures anew on this Occaſion, leſt by anti-ſcriptnral Poſitions, they ſhould be found Fighters againſt God, *Acts* v. 39. the Teſtimony of my Conſcience is an abundant Satisfaction, that I have herein ſet before them, the antient Footſteps of Faith in Divine Revelation, and the Guilt of calling it Deluſion and Madneſs, to the Encreaſe of *Sadduciſm*, and all Manner of Profaneſs, far beyond what ever was in the *Jewiſh* Church. For, therein to the beſt of my Knowledge and Ability, I have conſulted only the Glory of God, and the general Good of Men, without any Aim to pleaſe others, or Benefit my ſelf any Manner of Ways; and if the Argument has led me, to do that which may diſpleaſe many, it was of abſolute Neceſſity to a right Diſcuſſion of it; at leaſt it was not my Purpoſe or Deſign; but becauſe I knew not how to avoid the ſame, without Injury to Truth, as it is in Jeſus. But, God be praiſed, I have a Conſcience void of wilful Offence to any one Perſon in the World, and I wiſh all Men were in that reſpect, no worſe; nevertheleſs, be it with me, as it will, in the Sight of God, others it becomes to look well to themſelves, when they judge without, and even againſt the Law and Teſtimonies Divine, in the Caſe of a Prophet. For, the higheſt Crime we know of, being that of blaſpheming againſt, or calumniating the Holy Ghoſt, our Saviour affixed it to the imputing of That to an unclean Spirit, which was the Operation of the Holy One, in *Mark* iii. 29, 30. And we are told in reference to the ſame Thing, that every *idle Word* (much more Doctrines taught) which Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an Account thereof, in the Day of Judgment, *Mat.* xii. 36. But as to the Prophet himſelf, it is enough for the Diſciple, that he be as his Maſter, and the Servant as his Lord; for, *if they have called the Maſter of the Houſe Beelzebub, how much more ſhall Men call them of his Houſhold ſo?* Mat. x. 25. And therefore the Conſciouſneſs of his own Innocence, muſt be his only Support, as among others it was with *Mary*, the Mother of our Lord, who lay under the Odium generally of the vileſt Impoſture, for 30 Years at leaſt, in pretending to conceive by the Holy Ghoſt.

FINIS.